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HARRY HOFMANN

Mrs. Temple's Telegram

A FARCE IN THREE ACTS

BY

FRANK WYATT AND WILLIAM MORRIS

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MRS. TEMPLE'S TELEGRAM

PRODUCED AT THE MADISON SQUARE THEATRE, NEW
YORK, FEBRUARY 1, 1905.

WALTER N. LAWRENCE, *Manager*

Cast of Characters

ORIGINAL CAST

Jack Temple	Frank Worthing
Frank Fuller	William Morris
Captain Sharpe	Frank Green
Wigson	Thos. A. Wise
John Brown	Edwin Fowler
Mrs. Jack Temple	Grace Kimball
Dorothy	Marion Lorne
Mrs. Frank Fuller	Margaret Drew
Mrs. Brown	Cary Hastings

Synopsis

ACT I—Morning.

II—Afternoon.

III—Evening.

The action of the play is supposed to take place at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Temple, 99 Curzon St., Mayfair, London.

1105702

MRS. TEMPLE'S TELEGRAM

COSTUMES.

FRANK FULLER. ACT I.—Stylish light-colored business suit, white tie, straw hat. ACT. II.—Same. ACT III.—Evening dress.

JACK TEMPLE. ACT I.—Evening dress. Trousers muddy. Top or rain coat, opera hat, rumpled shirt, handkerchief about neck, change to stylish dark business suit. ACT II.—Same. ACT III.—Evening dress.

CAPT. SHARPE. ACT I.—Frock coat, silk hat, light gloves. ACT II.—Same. ACT III.—English khaki uniform. Puttee leggings, etc.

WIGSON. ACTS I, II, III.—Butler's livery. Black tie, striped waistcoat.

JOHN BROWN. ACT II.—Light suit, with some character to it, but not too extravagant. Red tie, straw hat.

MRS. TEMPLE. ACT I.—Handsome white lace negligee. Change to house dress. Suitable for morning. ACT. II.—Afternoon gown. ACT III.—Evening dress, décolleté.

MRS. FULLER. ACT I.—Handsome carriage dress, parasol, hat and two veils. ACT III.—High neck evening gown, hat, white gloves.

DOROTHY. ACT I.—Girlish morning dress, no

MRS TEMPLE'S TELEGRAM.

train. ACT II.—Afternoon gown, no train. ACT III.—Evening gown, short.

MRS. BROWN. ACT II.—A full skirt made of dark green plaid cloth, short double-breasted box coat of same material. White shirt-waist under same. Heavy boots with low heels. Old-fashioned bonnet with strings. Lace mitts, carries small bead bag for handkerchiefs and telegram. Face very red. Whole make-up showing common attempt at style. ACT III.—The same.

PROPERTY PLOT

ACT I.

Ground cloth down, medallion and rugs. All furniture must be gilt, and of light design. 2 small sofas. 1 small writing desk. 4 pedestals with ornaments. 1 small table. 2 low back arm-chairs. 3 Small chairs. Baby grand piano and stool. Music cabinet. Fireplace and mantle. Brass fire-irons and fire set. Large oblong mirror over mantle. Coal scuttle with coal. 2 palms. Piano lamp. 6 Handsomely framed pictures to hang. Draperies on all openings. Grandfather's clock.

On desk.—Large blotting pad, several English telegraph blanks, plenty of writing material, fancy ink-stand, 2 pens, English R. R. time-table, (book form) small vase and roses, photo in frame, ash tray.

On mantle.—Clock, candelabras, 2 photos in frames, cigarette.

On table.—2 English pamphlets, matches in

MRS. TEMPLE'S TELEGRAM.

stand, ash tray, hand mirror, 2 cigarettes.

On sofa (L.)—English magazine, fancy pillow.

Side props on table off, L. U.

Field-glasses in case, door bell, coins, card tray and cards, 2 dress-suit cases, cigarettes and matches, 2 cigars, large bouquet of flowers, sheet music, English telegraph blank, written note in envelope, small bell to strike hour off R. I.

ACT II.

Same as ACT I. Door slam off L. U.

ACT. III.

Same as ACT I. Field-glasses on table R., English newspaper on table R., English newspaper on sofa L. Lighted candle in fireplace. Handsome lamp on table R. (lighted). Piano lamp (lighted).

(NOTE). Practical electric button, R. I. Electric button, L. I. (Not connected).

Both clocks set at Act I. 10 o'clock.

Act II. 4 o'clock.

Act III. 8 o'clock.

ELECTRICIAN'S PLOT

ACT I.

Light full up all through act. First border only

MRS. TEMPLE'S TELEGRAM.

used on account of ceiling. Strips (white) at opening left, also R. and L. of opening centre. White lights behind opaque windows at back. Amber medium in electrolier, also side brackets R. and L. of large opening at back—not lighted till third act. Practical fireplace between 2nd and 3rd entrance R., supposed to be coal fire. Time—morning.

ACT II.

Same as Act I.—Afternoon, change mediums behind windows to amber—strip R. of opening C., also to amber.

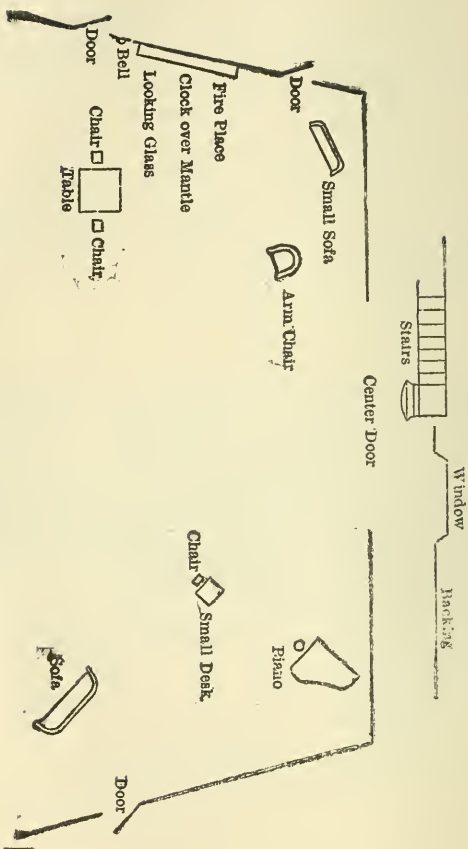
ACT III.

Same as Act I.—Evening. Red mediums in foots and first border red lights from fireplace. Side brackets lighted. Piano lamp and lamp on table lighted. Subdued light effect as curtain rises. At. cue electrolier is thrown on. Foots only come up white. Border does not change from red. Amber strip R., light from strips L. diminished. Change medium back of window to blue.

N. B.—Lights back of windows must be strong for proper effect.

MRS. TEMPLES' TELEGRAM

PLAN OF STAGE



MRS. TEMPLE'S TELEGRAM

Drawing room in MR. JACK TEMPLE'S house, Mayfair. Supposed to be the second floor of house. Scene and furnishings to be rich and elegant, yet in extremely good taste. Gold furniture if possible. There are solid doors with handles R. 2 and R. 3 entrances. The door R. 3 is open at rise of curtain. Between these doors is a fireplace with a coal fire burning. Over mantel is a long mirror. Two small openings fill the left side of scene. A large opening takes in entire back of set with balcony running across same. A bit of drapery is thrown across this balcony. A chair and jardinier are also on balcony. This large opening shows another room on hall. There is a large window left of backing, and a staircase right of same. Window at staircase, also small window over the bay and on line with the balcony. These windows are opaque and are lighted by mediums from behind and which are changed in color for each act.

A ceiling covers the entire set.

An electrolier is hung from same—and

there are side brackets R. and L. of large opening center. There is an electric push bell (practical R. of door R. 2 E.) and an electric button (to turn on lights in last act) is placed L. of opening L. 2 E.

A small sofa is drawn L.—a ladies' desk and chair L. C. above sofa. A baby grand piano is in left corner of scene, with keyboard facing front. There is a space between desk and piano.

A small parlor table and two chairs are right. Brass coal scuttle—tongs—etc., above mantel (R.) There is a practical clock on mantel. (Hands must be turned and set for 10 o'clock on rise) A small gold settee is placed at right angle from the fireplace—a gold arm chair is pretty well towards R. C. of stage. There is a space between the settee and the arm chair. Painted ground cloth to represent hardwood floor. Turkish rugs cover same. Oil paintings and etchings are on walls of set. A Grandfather's clock is on first landing of stairs. Pedestals with bronzes. Two candelabra on mantel. Time-table, blotting-pad, pens, ink, paper—English telegraph blanks, etc., are on desk. Copy of "Illustrated London News" on small settee by fire-place. Cigarettes, English Magazines—a hand mirror—a small tray—matches—and small spirit lamp or cigar lighter are on table right. Spirit lamp lighted on rise. A sofa pillow is on sofa left. Also sofa pillows on bay window seat.

There is an electric lamp (L.) of piano and in last act a small electric lamp on table (L.) Both have fancy shades. A brass jardiniere with palm is on end of window seat and a brass piece on stairs in front of newel post. A small vase with flower is on desk, and one on piano. Some small pictures, (family) on mantel, and piano. Portiers on all openings

(Time: Morning. All lights up.)

Music: to take up curtain. When well up the clock on the mantel strikes ten. On the last stroke WIGSON enters C. from L. He looks about, then crosses down to door R. 2 E. He opens same, and looks off.

WIGSON. (*closing door*) Master is up to his old tricks. (*goes back to table right*) Missus won't be down for some time, and I always enjoy my cigarette after my coffee. (*lights cigarette, puts out spirit lamp, and sits in chair at desk L. C.*) I don't suppose I go to a theatre once in 12 months, but when I do go I likes a play that cheers me up a bit. Last night I was in the pit of the Frivolty Theatre, and the whole play was about a young husband, who'd been out all night and had to explain things to his wife, who was mad with suspicioning. Lor', how I did laugh at the comical things he said. As my missus is very jealous of master—and as the leading lady in the play was also—I really felt quite at home. That reminds me—(*looks at clock*) The valet in the play was always helping his master out of scrapes—by mak-

ing the clock slow—instead of fast—he said “It would go a long way towards preserving the tranquillity of the household”—I’ll help my master by putting our clock back an hour. (*goes to clock and turns hands back to 9*) But to really do him a service (*crosses down left front of sofa*), I ought to put it back 12 hours.

(*MRS. TEMPLE enters from R. 4 E., down stairs, she is very nervous, irritable, and excited. She crosses up quickly to window left, and glances out. She turns and crosses down right, above table. As she reaches mantel, she glances at clock.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. That clock is an hour slow. (*goes to clock and turns it forward to 10.*) Coals, Wigson!

WIGSON. (*hiding cigarette behind him*) Too bad, mum. They are nasty things to have at this time of the year.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*comes to c.*) I believe you’re becoming deaf, Wigson. I said coals for the fire. (*crosses around front of table to door R. 2 E.*)

WIGSON. **Very good, mum.** That’s just what I was going to do. (*goes up to fireplace, puts coal on fire with tongs*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*opening door R. 2 E. and looking off.*) Not home till this hour. (*leaves door open, and crosses quickly in front of sofa and sits.*) I suppose you, and all the other servants are aware, that your master has been out all night, and hasn’t yet returned.

WIGSON. (*still arranging fire*) Well, mum, in

talking it over with the cook we rather fancied that that was the case.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*impatiently, drumming on stage with her foot*) And within an hour, I suppose, all the neighbors will be aware of it. (*Mrs. Temple rises, goes up right of sofa and left of desk, looks out of window, then comes back quickly to sofa and sits.*)

WIGSON. I suppose so, mum. Cook generally lets 'em (*coming down R. of her*) I sincerely hope nothing has happened to master. I can't remember, mum—the name or date—I never could remember dates—but some years ago a gent who stayed out—just like master, was found drowned, robbery was evidently not the motive power for the crime—for when the heartbroken wife went to idemnify his mortual remains, she found in a locket she had given him the picture of another woman who—

MRS. TEMPLE. (*looks at him quickly, then rises, crosses up to left of table right and sits*) You may leave the room.

WIGSON. Very good mum. (*he starts to go L., then comes back*) That reminds me, mum, I hope you won't forget that the lady is calling to see you to-day about my character. I'm leaving to-morrow, you know, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*impatiently rising*) Yes—yes—yes—I know—go away. (*goes around front of table and up to mantel*)

WIGSON. That's just what I was going to do. (*exits C. to L.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. What shall I do? (*crosses up to*

window L., looks out; then comes down left of desk, and right of sofa, to front of same, sits) I haven't slept a wink all night. What does he mean by such conduct? How dare he! (*crosses to table R., sits left of same*) He said last night he was going out for an hour or so—he went without even kissing me good-bye—and that is the last I've seen of him. I could cry my eyes out—only I won't—I'm too angry.

(*Enter DOROTHY from L. 2nd., crosses quickly to MRS. TEMPLE, who is seated at table right*)

DOROTHY. Good morning, sis.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*kissing her*) Good morning, Dorothy. Many happy returns of the day.

DOROTHY. Thank you, sis! Cook tells me that Jack has been out all night. You're not alarmed about him, are you, dear? (*back of chair, put hands on MRS. TEMPLE'S shoulders*)

MRS. TEMPLE. Alarmed! Not in the least (*rises*) It is obvious that Mr. Temple has discovered companionship more congenial than mine, so why should I seek to restrain him? (*crosses to sofa L. and sits*)

DOROTHY. (*follows her over, going back of sofa*) You don't mean a word you are saying. I know you love Jack devotedly. Why, everyone considers your marriage simply ideal.

MRS. TEMPLE. My dear, all marriages are considered ideal where personal pride prevents the family skeleton from being exhibited to the vulgar gaze. Mother was right. She objected to my marrying Mr. Temple.

DOROTHY. (*goes around left of corner and sits L. of MRS. TEMPLE*) Yes, but you told me mother objected to every man who proposed to you.

MRS. TEMPLE. And she was right. She reasoned that although the man might be different his faults would be the same. (*rises, goes up to desk*)

DOROTHY. I don't think you are very encouraging, when you consider that marriage is the ultimate destination of our sex.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*comes back of sofa, takes DOROTHY'S head in her hands*) Forgive me, little sister; I must not allow my troubles to overcast your young life. I know that's brutal treatment—inclines me towards selfishness.

DOROTHY. Certainly, if you and Jack are not happy, it is presumption on my part to anticipate it, I think I'll die an old maid.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*comes to right corner of sofa*) No, you won't dear, no, you won't. When you fall in love, you will marry in spite of anything I may say. I only hope, dearie, that you'll meet the right one. (*crosses to table R., right of same*)

DOROTHY. Oh! Then you admit that there are some perfect men. (*rises*)

MRS. TEMPLE. There may be, dear but I've never met them. (*sits.*) The present fashion in men's coats make no provision for wings. By the way, speaking of angels, I've noticed Captain Sharpe has been calling here rather frequently of late.

(*At mention of CAPTAIN SHARPE'S name, DOROTHY goes up by desk chair.*)

DOROTHY. Do you like him? (*sits in desk chair*)

MRS. TEMPLE. How do you mean, as a matrimonial possibility?

DOROTHY. (*quickly*) Oh, not for me; for somebody else.

MRS. TEMPLE. Has he proposed?

DOROTHY. Y—e—s.

MRS. TEMPLE. Do you love him?

DOROTHY. (*very decidedly*) Oh! No!—that is, I don't think I do.

MRS. TEMPLE. There seems to be considerable uncertainty about your feelings.

DOROTHY. (*rises, crosses to MRS. TEMPLE, kneels on chair L. of table—arms on table*) Well, you see, I—Oh, sis, there is something I have wanted to confide in you for a long time, but I was afraid of Jack, he is so quick-tempered. Now promise me that you won't consult him about it.

MRS. TEMPLE. I think I can safely promise that. From present appearances it seems unlikely that I shall ever consult him again on any subject.

DOROTHY. Well, you know after you left us at Nice, the Captain was with us a great deal. He won mother by telling her the most romantic tales of adventure; he had hunted lions in India, and bears in British Columbia.

MRS. TEMPLE. What a hero!

DOROTHY. (*rising and facing to front*) One night as we stood looking out over the sea—

MRS. TEMPLE. Moonlight, of course?

DOROTHY. I—I don't remember. (*goes to c.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. He proposed?

DOROTHY. Yes.

MRS. TEMPLE. Then it must have been moonlight. You refused him?

DOROTHY. No. You see, it was the first time that anyone ever proposed to me, and I didn't know just what to do, so I ran away.

MRS. TEMPLE. That was a mistake.

DOROTHY. A few days after this the Captain was called to Paris. We exchanged letters for some time.

MRS. TEMPLE. The romance is progressing.

DOROTHY. (*crossing to sofa L.—sits*) I wish you wouldn't treat it in such an inconsequential manner.

MRS. TEMPLE. Ah, forgive me! (*laughs*)

DOROTHY. It's awfully serious to me.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*rises*) Of course! (*sits in chair L. of table*)

DOROTHY. Well, one day I received a letter from him in which he said if I didn't write and tell him that I loved him he would do away with himself, so I wrote.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*laughs*) What did you say?

DOROTHY. What he asked me to say, that I loved him.

MRS. TEMPLE. If you didn't care for him, why did you say so?

DOROTHY. Why, to save his life, of course.

MRS. TEMPLE. Then you're engaged?

DOROTHY. Well, I don't know whether I am or not; I told Captain Sharpe that he'd have to speak to Jack.

(*Warn Bell*)

MRS. TEMPLE. Did he?

DOROTHY. Yes.

MRS. TEMPLE. What did Jack say?

DOROTHY. That I wasn't old enough to know my own mind—and that he didn't like army men and had other plans for me.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*rises and comes to c.*) Oh, indeed—I'll show my husband that other members of the family are entitled to opinions. (MRS. TEMPLE *goes up to mantel*)

DOROTHY. What will you do?

MRS. TEMPLE. I don't know yet. I must have time to think over what plan is best to pursue. (*bell off* L. U. E. MRS. TEMPLE *crosses to* DOROTHY) There's Jack now. That is his ring. Go to your room, dearie, and don't worry any more about it. My precious husband will find that his adversary has received reinforcements.

(MRS. TEMPLE *puts her left arm about* DOROTHY, *leads her up to stairs R., where she exits.* MRS. TEMPLE *then goes to C. L., where she listens.*)

TEMPLE. (*speaking outside, left very indistinctly to convey the idea of being downstairs*) Yes, Wigson, I'm home. Was the missus anxious about me?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*looking off from C. to L.*) He has come at last. Now, what will take place? (*comes down L. of table R.*) I suppose he'll try and make some excuses. He is certain to invent some falsehood—the coward! (*crosses to left, near sofa*) But I'll let him ramble on, and fall into pitfalls of his own treachery—Oh, the wretch

—Mother warned me of this. (*sobs, crosses R. above table and goes to fireplace, resting arms on mantel*)

(*TEMPLE enters G. from L. in evening dress—shirt much crimped, trousers and shoes very muddy and trousers rolled up; a handkerchief is tied about his neck. He wears a long overcoat and carries opera hat. Comes in slowly and meekly and stands for a moment in C. of stage. MRS. TEMPLE is leaning on mantel—her back is to him.*)

TEMPLE. Er—good morning—good morning. (*MRS. TEMPLE does not move*) It's nice day out, isn't it? Oh, I forgot, you haven't been out. Not raining much now, you know, it has been raining; rather muddy, though—but it's nice clean mud. (*pause*) You probably didn't hear me—but I said—Good morning. (*pause*) I'm sorry I'm late for breakfast. (*MRS. TEMPLE looks at him in a contemptuous manner—comes down right of table and sits, her back to him*) No, I mean, I hope you weren't anxious about me. (*comes down a little C.*) You know, I couldn't possibly get home last night—because you see, I was unable to get down. (*MRS. TEMPLE turns her head—looks at him with an air of contempt—then turns away again*) Oh, hang it all, please say something. (*comes to front of table, sits on same, places opera hat on table*) Now, suppose I were to tell you, that last night at the Exhibition I went up in the Ferris Wheel—that the machinery got out of order, and I was stuck up in the clouds until this morning?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*rising and facing Jack*) And do you expect me to believe such a foolish explanation as that? (*crosses to front of sofa left—sits*) Why, it's too utterly childish to ever consider.

TEMPLE. (*comes a little to c.*) I knew you'd say that—I knew it—certainly, the idea is as you say, childish—ha, ha, ha! (*laughs dismally*) It's only my little joke—that's all. A harmless pleasantry. I just wanted to hear what you'd say. (*goes a little to R. C., puts hand in left pocket of overcoat, feels glasses, takes them out. Aside*) Now I wonder where I got these. Oh, yes, I remember, I'll never see her again. (*looks around at MRS. TEMPLE*) But I've got to get rid of them somehow. (*goes around front of table and up to mantel*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*firmly*) Well, Mr. Temple, I'm waiting.

TEMPLE. (*carelessly*) Are you, dear? What for?

MRS. TEMPLE. For some reasonable explanation of your conduct.

TEMPLE. (*aside—coming down to chair left of table*) Well, she won't believe the truth, so here goes for an out and out whopper. (*aloud, crossing to right corner of sofa*) My dear, last night I met a friend whom I haven't seen for years—a great friend—an intimate friend—he asked me home to supper—and, by the way, it was an excellent supper—let me see—we had—

MRS. TEMPLE. Never mind what you had.

TEMPLE. All right, supper's over. My friend lives in the suburbs. As luck would have it, I missed the last train—wet night—impossible to see a cab—couldn't wire you—office closed, so he

put me up. I slept in his house, caught the first train this morning, and here I am. (*pause. He goes a little to right, waiting for her reply*) And here I am—have you anything to remark?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*rising*) And do you really expect me to believe all this?

TEMPLE. It is an acknowledged and accepted fact that a wife should believe everything her husband tells her. (*TEMPLE goes to L. corner of table R.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. Let me tell you at once that I do not believe a word of your story. (*goes up stage to c., then down R. c. a little above JACK*)

TEMPLE. But, by dear—

MRS. TEMPLE. And I may also tell you that unless this absurd tale turns out to be absolutely true, I shall leave you forever, and return to my mother. (*goes up to writing-desk and sits—back to audience*)

TEMPLE. (*kneels on chair, L. of table*) But my dear Clara, you take this matter too much to heart—I assure you.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*turning in chair to R., facing TEMPLE*) Kindly tell me the name of your friend—you have known for so many years.

TEMPLE. (*going up R.*) His name? Oh—John Brown.

MRS. TEMPLE. His address?

TEMPLE. Elm Avenue.

MRS. TEMPLE. Isn't that rather vague? (*she turns around in chair to L.*)

TEMPLE. (*goes around back of desk to L., so as to face her*) I tell you my friend Brown lives

at Elm Avenue, Pickleton on the Thames.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*turns in chair to R.*) Pickleton on the Thames!

TEMPLE. (*goes back of desk again to R.*) Yes, that's right—once you get it fixed in your memory, you'll never forget it. I say, though—you're not writing to your mother, are you? Come now, why not forgive and forget? (*drops down a little R., just above chair L. of table*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*who has finished writing—blots same—and turns to front in chair*) If you have told me the truth—there is nothing to forgive. If, on the **contrary, you have deceived me**, I can neither forgive nor forget. (*takes telegram, rises and crosses down to table R. in front of JACK*)

TEMPLE. (*coming down L. by sofa, after her crossing*) But you know when I went out, I had no intention of remaining—I was only seeking a little **fresh air**.

MRS. TEMPLE. It took you a precious long time to find it. (*sits L. of table*) Devotion to your own pleasures had made you oblivious of the happiness of others. I'm not surprised that you've forgotten this is Dorothy's birthday.

TEMPLE. (*sits on sofa L.*) Oh, I say now—that's doing me an injustice. If there's one thing a man does not forget, it's family birthdays.

MRS. TEMPLE. Yet you return without even a bunch of flowers for the child.

TEMPLE. Again you wrong me. As she had everything, the question was—what shall I get her? Even the wheels of the train this morning seemed to say—what to get Dorothy? What to get Dorothy? Suddenly it came to me like an inspiration—

why not get her some field-glasses? (*holding them out*).

MRS. TEMPLE. (*rises*) *Field-glasses!* Now I should like to know what use she can possibly have for field-glasses?

TEMPLE. Oh, I don't know—they might be useful—in case she wants to look at the fields—(MRS. TEMPLE *looks at him in contemptuous manner, goes around table and up to mantel*) I mean up the river.

(*Enter DOROTHY, coming down stairs, R. 4 E. She stops on seeing MR. TEMPLE.*)

DOROTHY. (c.) Oh, excuse me—I didn't know Jack had returned.

TEMPLE. (*jumps up*) Returned? One would think I had been lost or stolen—I wonder you didn't offer a reward for me?

MRS. TEMPLE. You see, you can't speak to him, dear—he's a fearful bear.

DOROTHY. O, dear, dear, and this is my birthday, too. (*sobs and sits in chair R. C. up stage*)

TEMPLE. Now, please don't let us have any tears. I hate tears. (*goes around left of sofa and up to piano*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*going right of DOROTHY, puts her arms about her*) Don't mind him, dear; you cry just as much as you please. I don't see how you can be so cruel, Jack—the poor child is naturally sentimental to-day.

TEMPLE. (*has come down left of sofa again, he crosses in front to L. C.*) Well, you know, Clara,

how crying affects me! But I've got something here that will make her smile. (*puts glasses behind him*)

MRS. TEMPLE. I'm afraid they will! (*she sits on sofa in front of fire, picks up paper and reads*)

TEMPLE. Now guess what I've got for you?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*without turning*) I'll help you, dear. They're neither animal or mineral, useful nor ornamental.

TEMPLE. (*advancing L. C., handing her the glasses*) Many happy returns of the day.

DOROTHY. (*rises, takes glasses, looks at MRS. TEMPLE*) What shall I do with them?

TEMPLE. (L. C.) Oh, anything you like. They're out of my hands now—there are no conditions attached to them.

DOROTHY. (R. C. *up stage*) But, really, Jack, I have no use for them; I'm keeping them from someone who would probably value them. I don't think I'll accept them.

TEMPLE. (*annoyed*) But you must accept them—somebody's got to accept them. (*goes down L.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*goes up L. of DOROTHY, crossing behind her, places her left arm about her, and passes her across to R. 4 E. up stage*) Come, dearie—we are not obliged to remain and listen to his brutal language.

(DOROTHY *exits upstairs, R. 4 E. sobbing.* MRS. TEMPLE *stops in first landing*)

TEMPLE. Oh, I say now, I don't know any brutal language.

MRS. TEMPLE. I am going upstairs to pack, as I may have to leave you at any moment. I may mention that when I married you, I thought I had married an honorable man. (*exit* MRS. TEMPLE *upstairs* R. 4 E.)

TEMPLE. (*follows her up*) Oh, I say, Clara—may have to leave me at any moment? Going upstairs to pack. (*stops* R. c. *Bell rings off* L.) Well, how does she know that I'm not telling her the truth? (*comes down front of sofa left*) The law considers a man innocent until he's found out, and as she hasn't found out anything, ergo—I am innocent. (*takes off overcoat*)

WIGSON. (*enters c. from L., coming down L. c.*) A lady to see you, sir.

TEMPLE. You mean to see Mrs. Temple.

WIGSON. I'm giving the message, sir, exactly as I received it. She wishes to see the gentleman.

TEMPLE. Does she mean me?

WIGSON. As there's only two of us in the house, sir—

TEMPLE. What's her name?

WIGSON. Refused to give her name, sir; said as how you wouldn't know her.

TEMPLE. What does she look like?

WIGSON. Rather good figure, sir, and I'm quite a judge of figures—but I couldn't see her face, as she's heavily veiled and mysterious like.

TEMPLE. (*crosses to table right*) Well, tell her I'm up in the Ferris Wheel—I mean, that I'm not at home.

WIGSON. Saw you come in, sir.

TEMPLE. Just my luck—I suppose I'm in for it. Show her up! (*WIGSON exits c. to L.*) Some sub-

scription, I suppose, for a Charity Bazaar. (*crosses to sofa L., puts on overcoat*) Clara is so thoroughly illogical—I tell her the truth and she doesn't believe me; then I take the trouble to invent a lie and she mistrusts me—so what is a man to do? (TEMPLE *crosses to R. by table*)

WIGSON. (*enters C. from L.*) The lady, sir.

(MRS. FULLER *enters C. from L. She comes down*
C. WIGSON *drops down left, pretending to busy himself.*)

MRS. FULLER. (*looks at WIGSON, then aside to TEMPLE*) Please send your servant away.

TEMPLE. Wigson you may go.

WIGSON. Thank you, sir; that's just what I was going to do. (*exit WIGSON L. 2 E., takes magazine*)

TEMPLE. (*indicates sofa L.*) Won't you be seated, Madame?

MRS. FULLER. Thank you. (*crosses to sofa left and sits, raising her veil*) We meet again, Mr. Temple.

TEMPLE. (*surprised. Sits in chair L. of table*) Great Scott! You?

MRS. FULLER. You seem surprised?

TEMPLE. That's putting it mildly. I'm speechless. How did you learn my address? (*Goes to door R. 2, which he closes, then comes to R. C.*)

MRS. FULLER. I followed you in my cab and saw you enter this house.

TEMPLE. And you learned my name? (*he goes up and closes door R. 3*)

MRS. FULLER. Through the butler.

TEMPLE. (*aside*) That fellow's a treasure.
(*comes down and sits in chair L. of table*)

MRS. FULLER. I presume you've anticipated the motive of my visit.

TEMPLE. (*nervously*) I must confess my ignorance.

MRS. FULLER. You did not expect to see me again.

TEMPLE. (*rises, nervously*) I will frankly admit that I didn't. My dear Madam—I don't wish to appear ungentlemanly—excuse me. (*looks at watch, comes to L. c.*) But I have very important business matters to attend to this morning, and if you—(*he goes up to stairs R., looks off*)

MRS. FULLER. You may depend upon my not detaining you longer than is absolutely necessary. This visit, I assure you, is quite as embarrassing to me, as it appears to be to you.

TEMPLE. (*who has gone up—looks off R. 4 E.*) I wish Clara would conveniently have one of her little fainting spells.

MRS. FULLER. Your memory appears to be rather defective, Mr. Temple. You compel me to recall the fact that while imprisoned in the Ferris Wheel last night, I loaned you my field-glasses.

TEMPLE. (*comes to c., laughs nervously*) Oh, yes, that's odd. I was afraid something might happen to them—so—so I left them at the safety vaults.

MRS. FULLER. (*rises, comes to c.*) Kindly remember, Mr. Temple, I was behind your cab, and you never halted on your way home.

TEMPLE. No, I never halted on my way home. Well, when I say I left them, I don't mean to say

that I left them personally. No. On my arrival here, I called a messenger and had him take them. Now, if you'll kindly give me your name and address, I'll see that they're promptly returned. (TEMPLE *goes up looks off R.*)

MRS. FULLER. (*returns to sofa and sits*) Suppose you order the messenger to fetch them back at once. In the meantime I'll wait. (TEMPLE *comes down quickly R. of her*)

TEMPLE. No, don't wait. My dear Madam, you don't seem to realize my peculiar position—she may come in any moment. If she does, it will be most embarrassing. I shan't be able to present you, as I have never been introduced to you myself. (TEMPLE *is in front of desk chair*)

MRS. FULLER. "SHE," I presume, is your wife.

TEMPLE. (*looks towards R.*) My wife? Oh, no; my mother, she's a good mother—a splendid mother, but she's insanely jealous of any woman who appears to take the slightest interest in me. (*he goes up towards R. 4 E.*)

MRS. FULLER. Then, suppose I send for them later in the day?

TEMPLE. (*comes down R. c.*) No, don't send. You see, the note might fall into mother's hands, and that would entail embarrassing explanations. Suppose you drive up about eight o'clock—I'll be on the lookout, and will send the glasses out to you in your cab.

MRS. FULLER. (*rises*) Thank you, Mr. Temple.

WIGSON. (*enters C. from L. with card on salver, he coughs*) Cards, sir. (MRS. FULLER *lowers her veil and goes L. of sofa*)

(WIGSON comes down left of TEMPLE, who goes a little to right, as WIGSON enters.)

TEMPLE. (*Reading card*) Great Scott! I didn't know he was in town! Why, of course, I'll see him.

(WIGSON enters C. to L.)

MRS. FULLER. I'll not detain you any longer, Mr. Temple. (MRS. FULLER crosses front of sofa to C.)

TEMPLE. (*advancing a little above her at C.*) My caller is a man about town—and knows everybody in London—should you prefer not to meet him, I would suggest that you leave by this way—it leads to a door in the side street.

(TEMPLE crosses to door R. 3 E., throws open same, then advances to R. C.)

MRS. FULLER. (*crosses front of TEMPLE, up to door R. 3. E.* TEMPLE, *after she passes, drops down a little*) Thank you for your consideration, Mr. Temple. (*turns at door*) In our station of life, one can never tell where one may meet—it is needless to remind you, that the ridiculous affair of last night must be forgotten.

TEMPLE. Madam, I am a gentleman, and shall consider the incident closed.

MRS. FULLER. Until to-night, Mr. Temple.

TEMPLE. At eight, dear Madam. (MRS. FULLER exits R. 3 E. TEMPLE closes door quickly, and col-

lapses against same) Whew! What an escape. Fuller has turned up just in time—this is great luck. (*goes up to C., looks off L., then comes down left corner of table R.*) If there's one man in the world who can give sound advice, it's Frank Fuller.

WIGSON. (*enters C. from L., carrying two suit-cases*) Mr. Fuller, sir!

(FRANK FULLER *enters C. from L. and comes down left of TEMPLE after he has passed WIGSON, the latter exits R. 4 E., below stairs with suit-cases.*)

TEMPLE. Hullo, Frank!

FULLER. Hullo, Jack! (*they shake hands*)

TEMPLE. Delighted to see you—it seems ages since we met.

FULLER. Yes, I've been to Paris on a business-trip—only got back from Dover this morning. Looked in at the club, got your new address, and here I am. (*goes up, puts hat on top of desk, looks about*) Nice place you've got here. (*back to audience*)

TEMPLE. This is the first opportunity I have had to congratulate you. (*holding out hand*)

FULLER. (*coming down, taking his hand*) That's so, Jack.

TEMPLE. Although you've been married—let me see—six months, isn't it?

FULLER. Almost six months.

TEMPLE. Got your cards all right. How is Mrs. Fuller?

FULLER. Oh, very well, indeed, thanks. You know she's been with me on my trip, but she came

ahead two days ago to open up the house. As soon as we're settled, I want your wife to meet mine.

TEMPLE. I shall be more than pleased to.

FULLER. Thank you. (*smiles*) You know, she doesn't expect me till to-morrow—that's why I've looked in on you to-day.

TEMPLE. (*turns his head to front, not understanding*) I don't see what one reason has to do with the other?

FULLER. Well, I thought we might dine together, take in the "Empire" show and perhaps make a night of it. What do you say, eh? (*slaps him on back. TEMPLE, who has been up all night, is irritable and resents FULLER'S enthusiastic manner*)

TEMPLE. (*crosses to left*) Don't do that! No, thanks, I've made one night of it. (*throws open overcoat*) Don't I look it?

FULLER. Well, you do look a little bit crumpled, but why those togs at this time of the day?

TEMPLE. (*comes to him R. C.*) Well, you see, Frank, I went to the Exhibition last night, and patronized the Ferris Wheel.

FULLER. (R. C.) Um—um! (*Looks down in order to make point*)

TEMPLE. The machinery went wrong—the beastly wheel got stuck, and I was unable to descend until this morning.

FULLER. (*looks up quickly, pauses, gives him an incredulous look*) That's bully. (*laughs*) I say, Jack, that beats the old excuse of sitting up with a sick friend. (*puts hand on TEMPLE'S shoulder*)

TEMPLE. (*pauses, looks at FULLER, resenting his doubts, then goes to left and sits on sofa*)

All this I explained to my wife, who I may mention has a devil of a temper.

FULLER. (*follows him over, stands right corner of sofa*) Of course, your wife refused to believe a word of your story. That's only natural—who the devil would, eh? (*slaps him on back*)

TEMPLE. (*irritably*) Don't do that! Still, for all that, it happens to be the truth.

FULLER. (*gives him a push, over on sofa*) Dear old Jack—I know you. (*laughs and crosses to table, leans on left of same*)

TEMPLE. Don't do that—and don't laugh, old chap. I know it sounds utterly improbable—but the truth is often stranger than fiction, and seriously, Frank, I am really telling you the simple truth. Don't you believe me?

FULLER. Why, of course, I do.

TEMPLE. Thanks.

FULLER. I'm fool enough to believe anything you say.

TEMPLE. Finding that my wife disbelieved me, I was compelled in self-defence to lie.

FULLER. That ought to have been easy for you. (*sits L. of table*)

TEMPLE. I told her, that, having missed a train, I was compelled to pass the night at a friend's house.

FULLER. Now, couldn't you do better than that? That's rather a feeble invention of yours. Of course your wife wanted to know the name of your friend, also his address.

TEMPLE. Yes, I told her his name was John Brown.

FULLER. (*quickly*) Who's he?

TEMPLE. (*quickly*) I don't know. At any rate, I told her his name was John Brown and that he lived at Elm Avenue, Pickleton.

FULLER. (*to himself*) Pickleton!

TEMPLE. (*rising and coming to c., proudly*) I invented all that—I invented all that on the spur of the moment.

FULLER. (*quickly*) So I could imagine—it doesn't suggest any great mental effort. (*after laugh, TEMPLE goes up to desk, sits at same, head resting on hands, back to audience*) I don't see how you could expect your wife to believe any such address and name to be genuine. And then—?

TEMPLE. (*turning partially around*) Then, after I had told her, she sat down and wrote to her mother. She's upstairs now packing her trunks. (*turns back again to desk*)

FULLER. (*rises, down R. c.*) By Jove, Jack, this is serious.

TEMPLE. (*turning partially about to FULLER, excitedly*) **Great Scott!** She didn't write to her mother!

FULLER. No!

TEMPLE. She sent a telegram.

FULLER. **How do you know?**

TEMPLE. (*rising*) Here's the imprint on the blotting pad. (*holding it up*)

FULLER. (*goes up to upper corner of desk, looks at blotter*) Why, so it is! I say, Jack, hold it up to the mirror—we'll read it. Reverse it.

TEMPLE. (*takes blotting pad, crosses front of FULLER to mantel. FULLER stands back of settee as TEMPLE reads by holding, written side towards mirror, and reading same in glass*) "John Brown,

Elm Avenue, Pickleton. I implore you to see me at once. Husband must not know. Happiness depends on you. Shall be in all day waiting for you. Clara Temple, 99 Curzon St. Mayfair." (*goes across to desk, throws blotting pad on same*) Well, this is the limit. (*then down stage left center*) She has actually wired to the fictitious address I invented—now what will happen? (*despairingly*)

FULLER. (*laughingly, coming down L. C. R. of TEMPLE*) Well, telegram will be returned—party not known. Your wife will discover for certain that you have fibbed outrageously, and will fly to her mother. (*laughs, slaps JACK on back, and goes right front of table*)

TEMPLE. (*angrily*) Don't do that, and don't be so flippant. I'm fond of my wife.

FULLER. So am I.

TEMPLE. (*quickly*) Eh?

FULLER. (*quickly*) Oh, not your wife—my wife.

TEMPLE. (*goes up c.*) Now, can't you help me?

FULLER. I will if I can. (*comes to c.*) Let me see, I've never had the pleasure of meeting your wife.

TEMPLE. (*comes down L. of FULLER*) Who the devil said you had? And what's that got to do with it?

FULLER. (*placing his left hand on TEMPLE's right shoulder*) Everything. Now listen—I've got an idea. I'll get away from here before your wife returns, later I'll present myself to her as your old friend, John Brown. (*bus. During this speech, FULLER becomes enthusiastic and TEMPLE, as the idea begins to dawn on him, turns face to FULLER and smiles*) Say I've come in answer to her tele-

gram—lie until I'm black and blue in the face, and then having fulfilled my friendly mission, leave you two turtle-doves to live happy ever afterwards. How's that, eh? (*slaps him on back*)

TEMPLE. (*changing expression, angrily*) Damn it, don't do that!

(*He goes around table and up stage, placing his left hand to his back, feeling of the spot where FULLER struck him. As he goes right FULLER goes left to front of sofa—he is rather hurt that TEMPLE does not take kindly to his idea.*)

TEMPLE. (*turning up stage*) By Jove, that sounds all right.

FULLER. Why, of course it's all right.

TEMPLE. (C.) Hold on now—let me think. You come back here as John Brown, Elm Avenue, Pickleton. By Jove, it does seem all right.

FULLER. I told you it was all right. (*sits on sofa*)

TEMPLE. Frank, that's a great idea of yours. (*goes to door R. 2*) But there's one thing that's important. (*rings bell on door R. 2 E.*) We must arrange with Wigson. Fortunately he's deep, and can be trusted—for a consideration. (TEMPLE comes to R. C.)

(WIGSON enters R. C E., coming down C. L. of TEMPLE.)

WIGSON. Did you ring, sir?

TEMPLE. Yes, Wigson. By the way, my wife tells me you are leaving us?

WIGSON. Yes, sir, to-morrow will be the suspicious day, sir. Missus and I don't quite hit off, sir. (*to FULLER, coming to L. C.*) You see, sir my nature and Mrs. Temple's is very much alike—we're both rather quick-tempered, sir. The only difference between us is that I think I control mine better.

TEMPLE. (*going over R. of WIGSON, and apologetically to FULLER*) You see, Wigson was with me some years before I was married.

FULLER. (*pretending surprise*) Is that so? I thought he was one of the family. (*TEMPLE goes back R. C.*) Sit down, Wigson.

WIGSON. That's just what I was going to do. (*starts up to R. C. chair*)

TEMPLE. (*aside to FULLER*) Shut up! (*aloud, quickly, to WIGSON*) Oh! Wigson, I won't detain you. (*WIGSON stops, and returns to C.*) I—I—hope you won't be long out of a situation, Wigson.

WIGSON. I never am, sir—I've as good as settled now. I always make it a rule never to throw out the dirty water until I get in the clean. Missus is going to see a lady today about my character. I've made some inquiries about the people I'm going to, and the reports are quite satisfactory.

TEMPLE. I'm sorry you're going, Wigson.

WIGSON. I knew you would be, sir.

TEMPLE. (*giving him some silver*) Here, you put that in your pocket.

WIGSON. (*smiling*) Oh, thank you, sir. I knew I was going to get some money to-day.

TEMPLE. Did you?

WIGSON. Yes, sir. You see, I'm a bit supersti-

tious, and the palm of my hand has been itching me all the morning.

FULLER. (*on sofa L., smiles*) Nothing catching, I hope?

WIGSON. (*turns to FULLER*) Oh, dear, no, sir; it's not hyperdermick.

TEMPLE. (*turns to R. during laugh, then back*) Wigson, if a telegram for Mrs. Temple should be returned here to-day, marked "not known," "wrong address," or anything like that, bring it to me, will you? I would rather that Mrs. Temple did not see it. (WIGSON *smiles knowingly*) You'll do this for me?

WIGSON. Why, of course I will, sir. That's just what they did in the play last night.

FULLER. And if later on I should present myself to your mistress as Mr. John Brown, you won't be surprised, eh?

WIGSON. (*crosses over to FULLER*) Certainly not, sir. You may call yourself just what you like. (*sweeps around to right, then up stage, c.*) Anything else, sir?

TEMPLE. No, thanks.

WIGSON. (*starts to go, then returns, coming down c.*) That reminds me—I recollect my father, a just and generous man—kind to a fault, but who suffered from locomotive attacks you—

TEMPLE. (*angrily, points to L. 4 E.*) Get out!

WIGSON. (*dejectedly*) That's just what I was going to do. (*goes up and exits c. to L.*)

(TEMPLE *goes up stage in disgust, looking at FULLER.*)

FULLER. Say, Jack, I wonder you put up with that fellow.

TEMPLE. (*coming down R. C.*) This is his last day.

FULLER. My wife has to engage a butler, but I hope she does not catch anything like that. By the way, Jack, I meant to ask you, were you alone in the car when the wheel stopped?

TEMPLE. (*sits L. of table R.*) No; that's the serious part of it—there was a lady in the car with me—

FULLER. (*whistle in surprise*) Pretty?

TEMPLE. Very pretty—and refined—evidently a lady—I should judge married, as she wore a wedding ring.

FULLER. I wonder what explanation she made her husband? By the way, did you tell your wife anything about the married lady in the car?

TEMPLE. (*face to front*) No, no; that's one reason why I didn't stick to my original story—you see, Clara's so frightfully jealous, that no reasonable explanation would be accepted.

FULLER. Well, you see, Jack, you've been married longer than I have—you know, my wife believes anything I tell her.

TEMPLE. She does? I had an awful experience this morning. I was in mortal terror lest my wife should find her here.

FULLER. (*not understanding*) Find *who* here?

TEMPLE. Why, the lady.

(MRS. TEMPLE *speaking outside upstairs R.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. Very well.

TEMPLE. (*jumps up*) There's my wife now.

FULLER. (*rising, and crossing over to TEMPLE above him*) Then I'm off. I'll take a stroll down the street. Later, I'll return and present myself to her as your old friend, John Brown. (*shakes hands with TEMPLE, then goes up to c., getting hat from desk as he passes*)

TEMPLE. (*follows up R. of him*) I'm really awfully—obliged to you.

FULLER. (*up C. near L. exit*) That's all right, old man. You know, Jack, I may need your help some day—Au revoir, old chap.

(*Exits C. to L. 4 E.*)

TEMPLE. Au revoir, John Brown. (*looks off R. D 5.*) That's a capital notion of Fuller's. Now, if Clara rides the high horse, I'll know how to treat her. (*comes down stage R. C., looks in mirror over mantel*) I think it's about time I changed my clothes, and made myself presentable. (*crosses back of table to door R. 2 E., gets opera hat as he passes*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*enters from R. 4 E. downstairs, she comes down to front of sofa L.*) One moment, please! Am I to understand that you still adhere to your wildly improbable tale with regard to your whereabouts last night?

TEMPLE. (*comes to L. upper corner of table, in an injured manner*) Madam, if you had taken the trouble to observe my manner, if you had watched me carefully while I was telling you the simple tale, you would have noticed by my demeanor, by my candid and entirely frank behavior, by the honest,

open expression in my eyes, that I was obviously describing the pure, unadulterated truth.

MRS. TEMPLE. Be careful. I may be able to prove that your words were false.

TEMPLE. (*comes to c. with great dignity*) Put me to the proof—make every inquiry. Conscious of my own innocence, I wait with perfect calmness the most searching investigations. (*TEMPLE crosses back of table to door R. 2 E.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*rising and crossing to c. quickly*) Suppose I were to give you a last chance, and were to tell you that if—even now—you were to confess everything and beg my pardon—it is possible—(*TEMPLE makes movement towards her. She stops him when he is a little left of table by raising her right hand*) I say, it is just possible that I might forgive you. (*places her right hand on TEMPLE'S left shoulder on the last word of speech*)

TEMPLE. (*removing her hand with his right, she withdraws a step L.*) When you have proved conclusively that I've been upright and honest, and that your suspicions are false, then when you come to me and beg for my pardon, it is possible—(*MRS. TEMPLE makes a movement towards him. He raises his hand as she did*) I say it is just possible—that I may forgive you.

(*Exit R. E. in an exaggerated, dignified manner, closing door behind him, pause.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. Forgive me, indeed! (*comes to c., folds her arms*) His assurance is delightful. I won't be treated like this—beg his pardon, indeed? Never! I shan't stay another moment in this house.

(*crosses to L. of table R.*) Oh, Jack—Jack—how could you? (*sinks in chair L. of table, her hands outstretched on table in the direction that Jack went*) How could you?—I loved you so much (*turning to front*) But that's all over now. I hate the very sight of you. I can be firm and brave, so why should I wait for that wretched telegram to be returned? There is no possibility of truth in the story he has invented—the longer I stay here, the weaker he'll think me. He can write and beg and implore—(*crosses to front of sofa L.*)

WIGSON. (*enters C. from L. 4 E., comes down R. of her*) There's a gentleman who wishes to see you, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*sits on sofa*) I'm not at home, Wigson, to anyone.

WIGSON. (*down R. C.*) Very good, mum, but the gentleman says he has an appointment with you, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. Nonsense—I have no appointment with anyone.

WIGSON. Quite so, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*quickly*) Don't say quite so.

WIGSON. No, mum. (*WIGSON goes up stage*)

MRS. TEMPLE. I remember—Oh, Wigson, ask him to come up—I'll see him.

WIGSON. (*up near L. 4 E.*) Quite so—I mean very good, mum.

(*Exits C. to L. 4 E.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. So there is a John Brown. (*rises, crosses to C., looking toward R. 2*) Dear Jack told

me the truth after all. (*nervously*) He's come in answer to my telegram. (*crossing to table R.*) I'm almost afraid of meeting him—Oh, dear, what did I say in that message? I wrote it very hurriedly—I almost forget. I shall have to explain the truth to a man I have never seen before. (*goes up a little left centre, looks off towards L. 4 E.*) He's coming up. (*crosses down front of table to right of same*) Oh, dear, dear, I wish this interview was over.

WIGSON. (*enters C. from L.*) Mr. John Brown.

(FRANK FULLER *enters C. from L., hands hat to WIGSON, as he comes down. WIGSON exits C. to L.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*meeting FULLER L. corner of table, and offering her hand*) Why, how do you do, Mr.——

FULLER. Smith—(*very quickly*) Brown. My dear Mrs. Temple, I came in haste in answer to your telegram. I must confess that the peculiar wording of the wire rather surprised—I might almost say, astonished me.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*embarrassed and quickly*) I must admit that it was silly of me.

FULLER. (*rapidly*) Silly?

MRS. TEMPLE. More than silly—it was wrong.

FULLER. Wrong?

MRS. TEMPLE. I didn't know—I mean, I didn't think.

FULLER. Think?

MRS. TEMPLE. Oh, dear, dear, how can I tell you? (*goes a step to R.*)

FULLER. (C.) My dear Mrs. Temple, you appear to be greatly agitated—pray be calm. Please be

seated. (MRS. TEMPLE *sits L. of table*) We won't speak about your message until afterwards. For the present I can only say how extremely charmed I am to have the honor of making your acquaintance.

MRS. TEMPLE. Thank you, Mr. Brown. Won't you be seated? (*she motions to sofa. FULLER crosses to same*) I did not expect you. (FULLER *turns quickly*) I mean I did not expect you so soon.

FULLER. No? (*sits*) Why, your message implies haste. I received your wire just as I was rushing off to catch the train. It only takes thirteen minutes, you know, by the express; I can walk it in half the time if I run. (MRS. TEMPLE *looks at him in surprise, pause*) You see, there's Pickleton Junction, Riverside, Kensington, Putney, and Kew.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*nervously*) I have to thank you for coming so promptly.

FULLER. (*very calmly*) Not at all—the pleasure is mine, I assure you.

MRS. TEMPLE. I was not aware that Pickleton was so *near* the city.

FULLER. (*quietly*) Oh, much nearer.

MRS. TEMPLE. And, of course, womanlike, I never thought of looking in the time-table.

FULLER. Well, I think you'd have had some trouble in finding it if you had. You see, it's what we call an extra line—well, you know what I mean—

MRS. TEMPLE. (*pretending to understand*) Oh, certainly.

FULLER. Yes, there is also a double branch line, although it is in no way connected with the main system.

MRS. TEMPLE. I understand.

FULLER. Of course. Now, this branch line some-

times runs into the main line with fatal results to the commuters. This in turn divides into what we call the belt line, which is half way between the loop line—and the loop line—you follow me?

MRS. TEMPLE. Oh, perfectly.

FULLER. I'm very glad you do—because when you do us the honor of visiting Pickleton, I think you'll know just as much about the lines as I do.

MRS. TEMPLE. I know the suburbs very well, but I've never heard of Pickleton. It's rather an odd name for a town.

FULLER. Yes, it is rather an odd name for a town. You see, Pickleton is a modest little place, and doesn't figure largely in the doings of the world. It was named after an old fellow named Peter Piper, who invented a new kind of pickle.

MRS. TEMPLE. You like Pickleton?

FULLER. I love Pickleton—the country is beautiful, my home is beautiful, my wife is beautiful—and I have two little boys, both equally beautiful. The little boys are twins, and enormous for their size.

MRS. TEMPLE. How nice that is!

FULLER. Yes, isn't it? You know, they're so polite to each other that we've called them Alphonse and Gaston. (*rises and comes to c.*) But, my dear Mrs. Temple, I must apologize for having kept your husband away so many hours from your charming presence. I must confess at once that it was entirely my fault, and ask you to forgive me.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*rises and goes to front of table, leans on same*) Please don't say another word, Mr. Brown.

FULLER. Jack was just determined to catch the last train—simply wouldn't hear of passing the night with us. (*pause*) He seemed fretting to get back to you. My wife and I consider him a model husband.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*smiling, to front*) Dear Jack!

FULLER. Yes, dear Jack! Heaven bless him! We arrived at the station in ample time as I thought, but found to my horror that the time-tables had been altered and that the 11.30 had left at 11.15 1-2. Jack was beside himself—he rushed to the telegraph office to wire you, only to find it closed, and the operator away on his vacation.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*after laugh*) Pray, don't apologize.

FULLER. (*coming a little towards her*) Oh, but I must.

MRS. TEMPLE. The mistake was quite natural.

FULLER. (*going a little to R., near chair L. of table*) I suppose I should have gotten a time-table for the current month, but—

MRS. TEMPLE. (*quickly, crossing to sofa L.*) It really doesn't matter at all. (*aside, as she sits*) Oh, Jack, Jack, what a cruel woman I've been! (*MRS. TEMPLE faces up stage*)

FULLER. (*comes L. C. near desk*) My wife suggested the long-distance 'phone—I wish you could have seen Jack; he turned upon her quickly with a gesture of command, and in a voice betraying his intense emotion, he exclaimed, "Stop, Mrs. Brown"—(*raising his right hand, pause*) No, I beg pardon, Mrs. Temple, I'm wrong, I'm wrong. I want to be exact; I want you to thoroughly realize things exactly as they happened. Jack did not use a gesture

of command then—he used that at another time. I remember now, he folded his arms so (*folds arms*) as he said, “My poor little wife, despairing of my return, has by this time sobbed herself to sleep. I love her too dearly, Mrs. Brown, to startle her with the nerve-racking vibration of a nickel-plated electric bell.”

MRS. TEMPLE. (*handkerchief to eyes, turning away to front*) Please don't say any more, Mr. Brown.

FULLER. Then my explanation is accepted?

MRS. TEMPLE. Oh, yes, yes. I alone am to blame.

FULLER. (*comes down R. C. front of chair*) Well, now that I have explained all and been forgiven, may I know the reason of my being honored by your telegram?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*rises*) The reason?

FULLER. Yes, Mrs. Temple; your words suggested that you had a reason—a very strong reason.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*troubled, coming to C.*) Have you that telegram with you? (*this spoken quickly*)

FULLER. (*hesitates, looks up at ceiling*) Well, no, you see, as the train dashed into the underground the thought flashed across my mind—now if a collision occurs it will never do for that telegram to be found on me, so I'll destroy it. (MRS. TEMPLE turns head to L. with relieved expression) I looked for it in all my pockets, but found to my dismay that I had evidently left it at home.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*cheerfully, going back to sofa*) Then, Mr. Brown, let us forget that unfortunate telegram—don't let us refer to it again.

FULLER. (*very gravely*) Pardon me, Mrs. Temple, but I must refer to it; it is too important a matter to forget.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*again worried*) Oh, don't say that.

FULLER. I must.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*nervously*) I only sent that wire to—to—

FULLER. Yes?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*advancing c.*) I mean I wished—I wanted to—to—

FULLER. To?—

MRS. TEMPLE. (*not knowing what to say, with a rush to c.*) To ask you to come to dinner to-day?

FULLER. (*quickly*) Thank you. I accept with pleasure, but, remember, you sent me word "that your happiness depended on me"—(MRS. TEMPLE *averts her head to left*) "that your husband was not to know of my visit." Pardon me, Mrs. Temple, but it's wrong, you know—always wrong—to tell an untruth. (MR. FULLER *looks down*, MRS. TEMPLE *turns and looks at him, after laugh*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*turning a few steps from him to L.*) An untruth?

FULLER. (*with severity*) Yes, Mrs. Temple, an untruth.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*with emotion, crosses to sofa and sits*) Well, I will confess I sent for you—because I doubted my husband.

FULLER. (*quickly, with affected surprise*) Doubted your—why, you astonish me! (*falls in chair L. of table*) You actually disbelieve my dear friend Jack? Jack, the soul of honor, the very embodiment of truth! Oh, no, Mrs. Temple, you can't

mean it! (FULLER *turns from her, crosses his legs; arm on table, head resting on arm*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*rises*) I do—it was wrong of me—unjust, wicked. (*comes to c.*) I even threatened to leave him.

FULLER. (*turns to her, mock surprise*) Mrs. Temple!

MRS. TEMPLE. I might have broken his heart. (*goes up to desk, sobbing, sits with back to audience*)

FULLER. (*folds his arms, still seated, looks straight in front*) You might, indeed. (*pause, MRS. TEMPLE sobs*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*turning to R. to FULLER*) Well, why don't you say something?

FULLER. (*looking in front*) I'm trying to think of some excuse for you. I'm endeavoring to think what my feelings would have been, if my dear little wife had behaved as you have behaved. (*turns looks at MRS. TEMPLE*) But, no, that is impossible. (*turns to table*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*coming down c., tearfully, but firmly*) Has your wife never doubted you?

FULLER. (*rises quickly, stands by chair, quietly*) My wife doubt me? You might as well ask have I ever doubted her. No, Mrs. Temple (*goes a little to c.*); from the day we doubt each other we shall become as strangers—but you suggest an impossibility. (*turns away to front*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*earnestly*) Give me your hand, Mr. Brown. (FULLER *does so*) When I look into your honest hazel eyes, I feel sure that you're a good man.

FULLER. (*turns to front*) Thank you, Mrs. Temple, thank you. I don't pretend to be a perfect man, but no one has ever caught me in a lie. (*this spoken very quietly. Goes around front of table and up R. of same to door R. 2 E.*) With your permission, Mrs. Temple, I should like to pay my respects to Jack.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*crossing to R. back of chair L. of table*) Just a moment, Mr. Brown. This morning I doubted the existence of an ideal man. My meeting with you to-day has shown me how completely I was mistaken in my views—shown me that you are a man to be trusted.

FULLER. I hope, Mrs. Temple, you'll never have cause to change that opinion.

MRS. TEMPLE. Although I have only known you but a short time, and am already your debtor, circumstances compel me to make a further demand upon your friendship. (*comes to front of chair, and sits L. of table*)

FULLER. (*comes down R. of table*) I am at your service, Mrs. Temple; command me.

MRS. TEMPLE. I shan't detain you but a moment, Mr. Brown. Won't you please be seated? (FULLER *sits R. of table*) You may smoke if you like. (*indicates cigarettes*) I want your advice on a matter of great importance, and I must exact a promise that for the present my husband shall know nothing of the matter in question.

FULLER. I will respect your confidence, Mrs. Temple. I will guard your secret as carefully as I would one of Jack's.

MRS. TEMPLE. I hardly know how to begin what I want to say. You've never met my sister Dorothy?

FULLER. I've never had that pleasure.

MRS. TEMPLE. She is very much in love with a young captain in His Majesty's service. Jack is her guardian, but, for some unaccountable reason, refuses to give his consent to their marriage.

FULLER. I see. We had a case like that at Pickleton once (*crossing his legs*), but we made short work of the guardian.

MRS. TEMPLE. What did you do?

FULLER. Well, we got the upper hand of the old rascal and forced him by threats to give his consent.

MRS. TEMPLE. But what do you advise me to do?

FULLER. I advise you to put the matter entirely out of your mind. The affair is now in my hands. I will do my best to bring the young people together.

(WIGSON *enters* L. U. E.)

WIGSON. Captain Sharpe, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. I'll see him, Wigson. (MRS. TEMPLE *and* FULLER *rise*)

WIGSON. And seeing Captain Sharpe reminds me—

MRS. TEMPLE. Show him up.

WIGSON. That's just what I was going to do.

(WIGSON *exits* L. U. E. MRS. TEMPLE *crosses to left, front of sofa.*)

FULLER. (*stands leaning on R. of table*) May I suggest, Mrs. Temple, that for the present you do not let the Captain know you have confided in me, or you may ruin my plans?

(Enter WIGSON L. U. E., announcing)

WIGSON. Captain Sharpe. (WIGSON *remains in c. at back*)

(Enter CAPTAIN SHARPE. *He is a well-dressed, well-bred man of the world, frock coat, silk hat, etc.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*comes down L. C.* MRS. TEMPLE *offers her hand*) My dear Mrs. Temple, I must beg a thousand pardons for this rather early call. I thought Miss Dorothy might like to visit the Botanical Gardens this morning.

MRS. TEMPLE. Wigson, inform Miss Dorothy that Captain Sharpe is here. (WIGSON *exits R. 4 E. below stairs*) Pardon me, Captain Sharpe; permit me to present my husband's old friend, Mr. John Brown.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Glad to know you. (*they shake hands, meeting down R. C., each advancing a little*)

FULLER. The pleasure is mutual, I assure you, Captain—

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Sharpe—Army and Navy Club.

FULLER. I'm sorry I haven't a card with me, Captain, but the fact is I lost my card case as I was rushing off to catch the train this morning.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. You are not a Londoner, then?

FULLER. Oh, no, I'm a Pickletonian.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*laughs, turns to MRS. TEMPLE, goes over a little L. C.*) That's a rum sort of

name; I don't think I've ever heard of the place.
(*turns back to FULLER*)

FULLER. No, I've only met three people in London who have heard of it. (*goes up stage to mantel R.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*down left near sofa*) Mr. Temple was there last night and he's perfectly charmed with Pickleton.

FULLER. Yes, I think Mr. Temple's visit to Pickleton has given him a new lease of life.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*L. C. near desk*) Shall you be long in town, Mr. Brown?

FULLER. (*up at mantel*) Not long, Captain, I have a little business matter to attend to before I return home.

(WIGSON *enters R. 4 E. below stairs*)

WIGSON. Miss Dorothy will receive Captain Sharpe in the library.

(WIGSON *exits L. 4 E.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*starts to go up towards R. 4 E.*) *Excuse me, Mrs. Temple.*

MRS. TEMPLE. You'll lunch with us?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*stops up stage R.*) With pleasure, Mrs. Temple. (*bowing to her*) Au revoir, Mr. Brown.

FULLER. Au revoir, Captain.

(CAPTAIN SHARPE *bows and exits R. 4 E. below stairs.* FULLER *comes to center*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*advancing L. c. by desk chair*) Well, what do you think of him?

FULLER. I think he's all right. I'll do my best to win the fight for him.

MRS. TEMPLE. You are doubtful of the result?

FULLER. On the contrary, I am full of confidence.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*goes down L., laughs*) Over-confidence, you know, has often lost a battle.

FULLER. I know, Mrs. Temple, but my confidence is inspired by the knowledge of my enemies' weakness. I know Jack. (*FULLER goes R.*)

(*Enter JACK R. 2 E. FULLER and TEMPLE meet below table.*)

TEMPLE. (*pretending surprise*) Hullo, Brown!

FULLER. Hullo, Jack! (*they shake hands*)

TEMPLE. By Jove, I am surprised; who would have thought of seeing you here? This is an unexpected pleasure. (*FULLER looks at MRS. TEMPLE, aside*) How are you getting on?

FULLER. (*aside*) Famously. She pines for forgiveness. (*goes up stage L. c. by writing desk*)

TEMPLE. (*down R.*) Well, I'm delighted to see you. What can I do for you?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*seated on sofa L.*) You can do nothing for him except to thank him for his kindness, as he has done everything for us, Jack dear. He has brought us together again.

FULLER. (*up stage by desk c.*) It's a pleasure, I assure you, Mrs. Temple.

TEMPLE. (*down stage R.*) I'm bewildered! What does it all mean?

MRS. TEMPLE. It means that I telegraphed for Mr. Brown.

TEMPLE. (*with assumed surprise*) What?

FULLER. Yes. (TEMPLE *looks at FULLER, turns away to hide laughter, goes around front of table to right of same, then up to mantel*)

MRS. TEMPLE. He hastened here, and has proved to me that I suspected you wrongly. Forgive me for my suspicions. (MRS. TEMPLE *looks to front*)

TEMPLE. (*comes down front of this, smiling, extends his arms and starts to cross to her*) Forgive you? Well, I should say I—

FULLER. (*drops down c. between MRS. TEMPLE and TEMPLE, stops him, aside*) Don't give in yet. Remember, you're the deeply injured innocent.

(FULLER *goes up R. around back of table, and drops down R. of same.*)

TEMPLE. (*crossing to c. a little up stage, in an assumed dignified manner, very quiet*) Madam, I gave you the simple explanation of a simple little incident—you elected to reject all my assurances, you refused to believe a single word I uttered, you declared your intention of returning to your mother, and went upstairs to pack—(*turns from her. comes to R. and smiles at FULLER*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*quickly*) I was wrong—I own it. What more can I say?

TEMPLE. (*front of table R.*) Well, of course, if you put it like that. (*starts to go to her, FULLER stops him by taking hold of his right arm*)

FULLER. (*aside*) You're too calm; its unnatural. Fly into a temper—shout a little

TEMPLE. (*crossing to center to MRS. TEMPLE*) Wrong, madam! (*aside*) How's that (*turns to FULLER for approval*)

FULLER. (*aside*) That's the idea!

(*MRS. TEMPLE is surprised at JACK's manner, and shows it in her expression as she faces front*)

TEMPLE. (*crossing to R. corner of sofa, apparently in great anger*) Wrong, madam! Is that the mild way you describe your heartless conduct? You deeply wound my feelings, blast my—(*goes down stage below sofa, turns so that his back is to audience while he faces MRS. TEMPLE*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*quickly*) Oh, Jack! (*hides her face in handkerchief*)

TEMPLE. Blast my happiness, and then mildly bleat out that you were wrong—is that all you've got to say? (*bus.—at end of speech, TEMPLE turns and goes up stage in a diagonal line to foot of stairs right, at back. As he reaches C., without stopping, he smiles and asks FULLER, aside*) How's that?

(*FULLER, who is leaning over table right, enjoying the situation, answers.*)

FULLER. Fine—that's the idea.

(*TEMPLE continues walk, turns as he reaches foot of stairs—he is still smiling. At the same time MRS. TEMPLE turns and looks at JACK. He immediately changes expression to one of anger, and, to carry out the idea of being in a rage, goes over to left at back and strikes piano*

with his closed hand. Then returns c., where he stands, glaring at MRS. TEMPLE.)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*looking at JACK and extending her arms toward him*) No, Jack, I've much more to say.

TEMPLE. (*coming down L. c. near desk chair*) Then go and say it to your mother—your poor old doddering—

MRS. TEMPLE. What?

TEMPLE. (*quickly*) I mean doting mother—and never come back to me again, you wicked, wicked woman! (*comes to FULLER R., smiling, for his approval. (Aside)* How's that?

(*Warn Curtain*)

FULLER. (*R. front of table. Aside to him*) Now, you're overdoing it.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*rises and goes a little L.*) Oh, Jack, you once loved me.

TEMPLE. (*coming to R. corner of sofa*) Yes, I own it—and if ever I am to love you again—

MRS. TEMPLE. (*very rapidly, coming to left front of sofa*) Yes, yes, go on!

(*FULLER comes front of table, leans on same, takes out cigarette case, and matches. Music P. P.*)

TEMPLE. (*back of R. corner of sofa*) You must believe anything and everything I say—when I speak, the impossible must become possible—fiction shall be fact. What I declare—although the whole world shall doubt—you are to accept without hesi-

tation or murmur. (FULLER *strikes match*) Now, if you can change your suspicious nature and trust in me always—(MRS. TEMPLE *comes a step closer to him*) Always, I say—and forever—then—

MRS. TEMPLE. (*kneeling on sofa with right knee, and throwing her arms about his neck*) Then you will love me as before?

TEMPLE. (*pause*) Well? (*looks at FULLER. FULLER looks at him, nods his head. Then to MRS. TEMPLE*) Yes!

(MRS. TEMPLE *drops her hand on his left shoulder. He and FULLER exchange looks and smile. FULLER turns to front, and lights cigarette, as Curtain descends quickly.*)

ACT II.

Same as Act I. Afternoon. Lights behind windows change to amber. Same music to take up curtain. WIGSON is discovered up stage c. at back, he looks about, then comes down back of table right; he has a cigarette which he is about to smoke, as he starts to light same, CAPTAIN SHARPE enters from right third entrance, leaving door open, and crossing down to sofa L. The CAPTAIN has a cigar in his hand and is in same dress as Act I. N. B. The spirit lamp is lighted as curtain rises.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*sitting on sofa, R. end of same*) Wigson, let me have a light.

WIGSON. (*dropping cigarette on table*) That's just what I was going to do, sir.

(*WIGSON crosses with alcohol lamp to sofa left, holds same while CAPTAIN lights cigar.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*speaking as he lights cigar*) How are things going, Wigson?

WIGSON. (*standing R. cor. of sofa*) Rather uneven, sir. I have made up my mind, that in the future I shall only accept a place under certain conditions. I must have a written guarantee that the home is a happy one.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. You surprise me, Wigson. Do you mean to tell me that Temples are not happy?

WIGSON. (*goes R. back of table, places lamp on same*) It's up and down, sir. When Mrs. is in good temper, it's like being in heaven and when she's jealous of master, it's like being in——

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*laughs*) I know: the other little place.

WIGSON. (*goes around R. of table to front of same*) This morning I received a letter from the "Amalgamated Butlers' Gazette" requesting as a condesession that I write an article on the subject, "The Duties of Masters Towards Servants." I'll touch on the evils of jealousy, and the bad effect it has on the ladies and gentlemen in service. It think I'll take this house as an example. (*going to R. C.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. You won't mention names?

WIGSON. (*in a condescending manner*) Oh, dear no, sir, I'll only give the address. This morning I saw divorce in the air for the Temples, with the unpleasant prospect of my having to appear in Court as a witness.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. But Mr. Temple doesn't give his wife *cause* for jealousy.

WIGSON. Well, that I can't exactly say. sir. I was with Mr. Temple for three years before he was married and a more high-spirited gentleman I never did see. But women seem to forget that we men must have some liberty? (*goes to front of table &c.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*laughing*) Mrs. Temple, like Caesar's wife is above suspicion. I'll stake my life that she never flirts.

WIGSON. (*down R.*) Well, I always keeps my eye open and I must say I never saw anything in her conduct to offend me. That is until this morning when I discovered that Mrs. Temple had sent a telegram to a gentleman asking him to call.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*indignantly—rises*) Wigson, you forget yourself. I don't believe you.

WIGSON. (*goes up C. R. of desk*) You can see for yourself, sir, hold the blotter up to the mirror and you can read it.

(*As WIGSON indicates mirror he goes a little to R. CAPTAIN SHARPE goes up C. L. of WIGSON, R. of desk on line with same.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. If you're lying, Wigson, there'll be trouble.

(*CAPTAIN takes blotter from desk over to mirror R.*)

WIGSON. Hurry up, sir, I'll keep watch.

(*WIGSON goes over to door R. 3 E., which he closes—he then goes to C., looks off R. and L. Then stands watching the CAPTAIN.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*holding blotter up to mirror, reads*) "John Brown, Elm Ave., Pickleton. I implore you to see me at once, husband must not know, happiness depends on you, shall be in all day waiting for you." Clara Temple, 99 Curzon St., Mayfair.

(The CAPTAIN does not wait to read "Mayfair" in mirror—he speaks it as he crosses to desk—he throws blotter on same—WIGSON, after CAPTAIN has crossed, drops down R. of table R. At the same time FULLER enters from L. U. E. He is not seen by the other men—he remains up R. of desk, listening.)

This is a very serious matter. (CAPTAIN goes down L. of table R.) Don't mention it to anyone—but who is this Brown?

WIGSON. Well, it's really laughable, sir. Mr. Brown is—(looks up, sees FULLER) here, sir. (goes up R. of table to R. of arm chair up stage, on level with FULLER who is C., the arm chair being between them) I was just speaking about you, sir. (CAPTAIN goes R. of table and sits.)

FULLER. Yes, I know you were, Wigson—Well—now that I'm here, I'll speak for myself—Get out.

(FULLER crosses down behind table R. WIGSON crosses behind him to L. U. E.)

WIGSON. That's just what I was going to do. (WIGSON exits L. U. E.)

FULLER. (back of table, lights cigar) You're an inveterate smoker, aren't you, Captain?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (facing to front. Shortly) Yes.

FULLER. (behind table) Like a strong cigar?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (without turning) No.

FULLER. (looks at CAPTAIN) Is your regiment among those ordered to South Africa? (FULLER puts out spirit lamp.)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Yes!

FULLER. (*looks at CAPTAIN, then agreeably*) You'll miss the races at Epsom, won't you?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. No!

FULLER. (*smiling*) What's the matter, Captain, saving your voice?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*without looking at FULLER*) I never waste words on people I have no respect for.

FULLER. (*about to resent it, but checks himself*) Well you're mighty complimentary. What's the matter with you? (*FULLER crosses L.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*still to front*) I saw everything that went on at luncheon.

FULLER. (*smiling*) So did I, and some mighty good things went on, too. (*places sofa pillow left of sofa.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*rising, stands R. of table*) Mr. Brown, I'll come to the point at once. (*crosses to R. cor. of sofa*) You call yourself a friend of Mr. Temple's?

FULLER. (*sitting on sofa*) Well, I've often designated myself in that manner.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*angrily*) And the poor fool is blind to what is going on here. (*takes stage extreme right, below chair R. of table*)

FULLER. Going on where?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*turns R. cor. of table, facing FULLER*) Here in this house.

FULLER. (*quietly, smoking*) Oh, Temple don't care.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. It's time his eyes were opened. (*goes up R. of table, and then between settee and arm chair to C.*)

FULLER. Oh, let him finish his nap.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*with considerable force, coming down close to FULLER, a little below him*) He doesn't like me.

FULLER. Well I shouldn't think he would if you act like this all the time.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. But it's my duty to save him.

FULLER. (*calmly*) All right, go ahead and save him—if he doesn't object, I'm sure I don't.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*going to c.*) I expect to marry Mrs. Temple's sister.

FULLER. (*smiling*) Well, you're in luck, old man.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. As a prospective member of this family, it's my duty to tell Mr. Temple all I know——

(*Enter JACK R. 3 E. CAPTAIN crosses right.*)

FULLER. Well, what are you thinking about, Captain?

(*JACK comes to c. on line with desk.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*right corner of table R.*) You are just in time, sir—Mr. Temple, did you expect to remain at home to-day?

TEMPLE. (*very quietly*) No!

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*pointing to FULLER*) Did you expect a call from this gentleman?

TEMPLE. (*looks at FULLER—FULLER indicates himself. TEMPLE smiles at his reply*) No!

CAPTAIN SHARPE. You never return from business before evening?

TEMPLE. No.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. It's clear as day. Mr. Temple, prepare yourself for a crushing blow—your wife, in whom you repose every confidence, is in love with your friend. (CAPTAIN *goes up to mantel*)

FULLER AND TEMPLE. What! (FULLER *jumps up*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*crosses behind table to c.* TEMPLE *crosses to right by table*) Your supposed friend, Brown.

FULLER. (*front of sofa*) Here, I say—

TEMPLE. (*coming to R. c. To FULLER*) Hold on! (*to CAPTAIN*) If you're mistaken!

CAPTAIN SHARPE. I can prove every word I say.

TEMPLE. (*with great earnestness, crossing over L. c. to FULLER*) If you've abused my friendship—

FULLER. Why, Jack,—you know me.

TEMPLE. Yes, I know you—that's what troubles me.

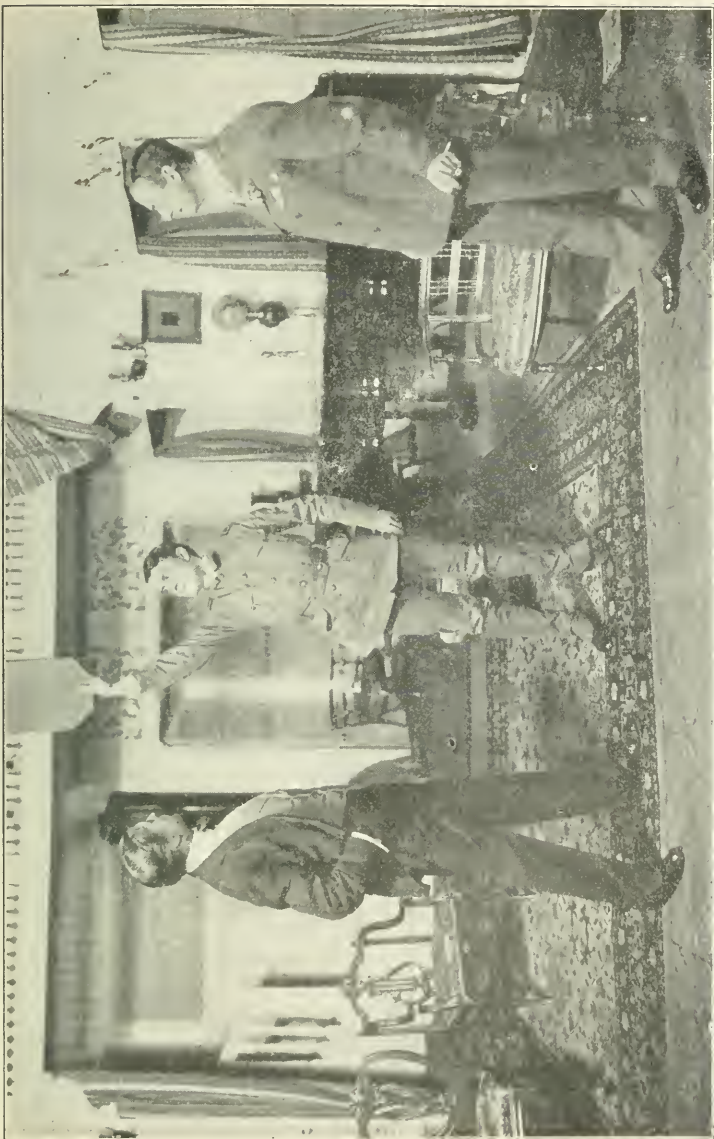
(TEMPLE *crosses to extreme right, around table and up to mantel. Then down R. of table.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (L. c. *near desk*) Your wife sends Mr. Brown word to call when you are not at home.

FULLER AND TEMPLE. What!

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*turns to desk, takes blotting pad*) Here is the tell-tale blotter.

(CAPTAIN *in his right hand, hold up the blotting pad, FULLER drops on sofa left. TEMPLE in arm-chair up right—Both are convulsed with laughter, and cover faces with handkerchiefs.*)



TEMPLE. (*looking at FULLER, speaks through his laughter*) Oh Brown—Brown—how could you? (*CAPTAIN slowly lowers blotter*)

FULLER. (*looks at TEMPLE*) Yes, I know Jack.

(*Both cover faces again with handkerchiefs.*)

TEMPLE. (*rises, goes around arm-chair, and back of settee to door R. 3 E., he can hardly speak from laughter*) For years, I have looked upon you as my friend—but after to-day the name of Brown——

(*He is unable to control his laughter any longer and exits quickly R. 3 E. The CAPTAIN, who has been looking at TEMPLE, not understanding, throws blotter on desk and crosses down below R. cor. of table.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. It appears to amuse you, Mr. Brown.

FULLER. (*laughing*) Why, it's the funniest thing I ever heard of. (*rises and crosses to left of table. CAPTAIN is right of same*) You'll agree with me, Captain, when you've heard the explanation. (*taking out card case*) You see Temple told me all about the telegram, and I suggested calling myself Brown. (*handing card*) Allow me, my card.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*reading same*) Frank Fuller!

FULLER. I'll tell you why later—but for the present in this house, I must be known by the name of Brown, not Fuller.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. I'm beginning to understand

FULLER. There's no time to be lost. Jack may

return at any moment and I want a word with you alone. Mrs. Temple has confided to me that you and Dorothy are in love with each other.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. But——

FULLER. (*quickly*) Now please listen to what I have to say—Mr. Temple has refused his consent to your marriage.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Yes—without giving me any reason——

FULLER. All right, now go to him again to-day—if he still refuses say to him “How about the married lady in the car?”

CAPTAIN SHARPE. But I don't know——

FULLER. Well, you don't have to know—he knows all right. If he still refuses say to him—“I think your wife ought to know everything.” He's in mortal terror of her, and will do anything you ask. (*Enter DOROTHY L. 2 E. with music roll, aside*) Here's the young lady. (*FULLER goes up stage center to right*)

DOROTHY. Pardon me, gentlemen—I didn't know anyone was here, I was going to *practice*.

FULLER. (*quietly*) On the piano, or the Captain.

(*FULLER exits R. 4 E. below stairs. DOROTHY drops down front of sofa left. CAPTAIN crosses to right of sofa.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Dorothy, Mr. Brown has hit on a plan to force Jack to give his consent.

DOROTHY. (*sits on sofa*) Has he?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Here I am asking Jack's con-

sent—and I'm not certain that you even care for me—you—you don't hate me, do you?

DOROTHY. (*rises, crosses to right*) I don't think I ever hated anyone. (*sits left of table*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Of course, you didn't (*coming to c.*) You know my regiment leaves to-morrow for South Africa. May I call again this evening? It will be my last visit for a year.

DOROTHY. (*turning her head from him toward right*) A whole year——

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*goes back of table*) A year of exile

DOROTHY. Well, a year does seem a long time between visits, doesn't it.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*leans over back of table so as to face her*) Suppose I return to find your heart given to another?

DOROTHY. (*her hand remains on table—turns face to front*) Now I'm sure, Captain, I'm not as changeable as all that.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*taking her hand on last word*) Then you do care for me?

DOROTHY. (*rises, swings around to right*) I didn't say that.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*still holding her hand*) Won't you say it?

DOROTHY. (*drawing her hands away*) Well, I—

(CAPTAIN looks at her for a second—she turns away—He sighs—turns—goes up stage, to centre.)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*up stage, stops*) I'm going.

DOROTHY. (*going up stage right of table and be-*

tween arm-chair and settee) But you're coming back this evening, aren't you?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Do you wish me to?

DOROTHY. (*going up R. of CAPTAIN*) Yes.

(*Enter MRS. TEMPLE, R. 2 E. Remains down by fireplace.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. Are you going, Captain?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Yes, Mrs. Temple, but with your kind permission, I'll return later in the evening. Good-bye.

DOROTHY. (*taking the CAPTAIN'S right arm*) I'll go as far as the door with you, Captain. You know, Clara, I shan't see him after to-day for a whole year.

(*DOROTHY and CAPTAIN exit C. to left. MRS. TEMPLE crosses to left of sofa*)

(*WIGSON enters L. 2 E., puts magazine on sofa*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*sits on sofa*) Oh, Wigson, I'm glad you threw out those cigars of Mr. Temple's, which you said were no good—you never forget anything.

WIGSON. (*goes behind sofa, coming to C.*) No, mum, nothing that I wish to remember. (*smiling*)

MRS. TEMPLE. When the lady calls to-day about your character I shall be able to say everything that's nice of you. (*MRS. TEMPLE picks up magazine and turns the pages*)

WIGSON. Thank you, kindly, mum, I'm sure I'd do the same for you.

MRS. TEMPLE. I think Mr. Temple looks feverish, Wigson. You know, he stayed at Mr. John Brown's last night.

WIGSON. Did he, mum. (MRS. TEMPLE *looks at him*) I mean yes, I know he did!

MRS. TEMPLE. I'm afraid he's caught a chill.

WIGSON. Too bad, mum. I thought I noticed that he acted kind of chilly this morning. Anything else, mum?

MRS. TEMPLE. No, Wigson.

WIGSON. (*starts to go, then returns*) By the way, mum, I forgot to tell you that Lady Winsome called while you were out.

MRS. TEMPLE. Oh, dear! I'm so glad I was out!

WIGSON. That's just what Lady Winsome said. (*he turns his head away and laughs quietly, enjoying the joke, then comes down to R. corner of sofa*) That reminds me, mum, some years ago—I won't say how many—when I was a little barelegged boy, a sweet little cherub with an angel face, and a voice that seemed to say—

MRS. TEMPLE. (*in same tone*) You may go, Wigson.

WIGSON. That's just what I was going to do.

(WIGSON *crosses dejectedly in front to right of table, right. DOROTHY enters c. from L. and comes down to chair left of table. WIGSON goes around back of table at the same time, and up stage, all the while listening to the conversation.*)

DOROTHY. He's gone.

MRS. TEMPLE. Who?

DOROTHY. Why, the Captain. (*sobs*)

MRS. TEMPLE. Cheer up, Dorothy.

DOROTHY. Poor fellow—I hope nothing will happen to him. You know, Clara, South Africa is such a long way off, and a year is twelve long months.

WIGSON. (*who is up stage near arm-chair, scratches the palm of his left hand and then rubs same on arm of chair. Aside*) I hates to see a woman cry. (*coming down stage c.*) I know you feel badly, Miss Dorothy, at the Captain's going away, but remember what the Bible tells us—"that the course of true love never did run smooth." Thank heaven, I'm not a woman—though I did have a narrow escape once. You see, Miss, I was born twins, but my sister died. (*DOROTHY rises, sits in chair R. of table*) Speaking of the tender passion, mum—(*crossing to MRS. TEMPLE, stands R. of corner of sofa*) There was my sister Mary Elizabeth Agnes, who was once crossed in love to such an extent that we thought she'd developed pippy leptic fits, and nothing would soothe her wounded feelings but baked bullocks' hearts served up very hot—well, one day as she was eating of 'em, and sobbing bitterly, she commenced to swell—and she swelled and swelled and—(*MRS. TEMPLE rises, turns quickly—he stops short*) That's just what I was going to do, mum. (*WIGSON exits c. to L. MRS. TEMPLE crosses to table, sits left of same*)

MRS. TEMPLE. What a happy woman I am, Dorothy! I have the best husband in the whole world, and to think that I refused to believe him when he told me of an ordinary occurrence that might have happened to anyone—but that is all over now; I'll

never again doubt what he says—never—never—never.

(Enter WIGSON c. from L.)

WIGSON. *(comes down R. c.)* There's a female person who wishes to see you, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. A person?

WIGSON. Yes, mum; I may say a particular kind of a personal female—hadn't got a card—wouldn't give her name. I told her as how I was pretty sure you were not at home, but she said she'd wait until you returned.

MRS. TEMPLE. *(to DOROTHY)* Poor thing—perhaps she's in trouble—I'll see her.

WIGSON. *(goes up a little to L. c., then stops)* Beggin your pardon, mum, but don't you think it's a bit dangerous, seeing no name, no-card people?

MRS. TEMPLE. Nonsense, Wigson; she may want assistance, and I'm sure I'd willingly help anyone to-day. Ask her to come up.

WIGSON. *(annoyed)* That's just what I was going to do.

(WIGSON exits c. to L. DOROTHY rises, goes around R. of table and up stage between arm-chair and settee to door R. 3 E. At the same time, MRS. TEMPLE rises and goes to desk left.)

MRS. TEMPLE. *(arranging articles on desk)* Won't you wait, dear?

DOROTHY. No, sis; I have to arrange the flowers for the table.

MRS. TEMPLE. *(drops down back of sofa,*

straightens sofa pillows) Oh, Dorothy, while I think of it, Jack wants you to return those field-glasses—I presume, to have your name put on them. (MRS. TEMPLE *goes around left of sofa and sits L. of same*)

DOROTHY. (*at door R. 3 E.*) Then Jack will have to ask the present owner, as I gave the glasses to Captain Sharpe.

(*Exit DOROTHY R. 3 E.*)

WIGSON. (*enters C. from L., stands right*) The person, mum.

(*Enter MARTHA BROWN C. from L. She comes on quickly, makes a sweep down stage and seats herself right of MRS. TEMPLE on sofa. WIGSON assumes a superior manner and exits C. to L.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*surprised, rises, crosses back of sofa to right centre*) May I ask the reason of this visit?

MARTHA. You'll know when I get good and ready to tell you. First of all I'm a perfect lady—you're supposed to be a lady—so let us behave as such.

MRS. TEMPLE. (C.) Both ladies?

MARTHA. Well, I'm not so sure about you. (*rising, coming to centre*) Aint' you talkin' a little loud for a lady? I suppose, Mrs. Temple, you've got a poor fool of a husband. Does he know you're a little bit frisky?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*crosses to left in a great rage*) How dare you!

MARTHA. May I ask if you sent a telegram to John Brown, Elm Avenue, Pickleton?

MRS. TEMPLE. I did.

MARTHA. And the party kept the appointment?

MRS. TEMPLE. He did.

MARTHA. Well, I am Mrs. John Brown, Elm Avenue, Pickleton.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*coming to c., close to MARTHA*) You are sure you are not mistaken.

MARTHA. (*crossing to left*) Well, I guess I ain't forgot my own name and address.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*crossing to table R., sits R. of table*) But why didn't you send in your name?

MARTHA. (*coming to c.*) Because you wouldn't have seen me if I had. I'm still waiting for an explanation, dear Mrs. Temple.

MRS. TEMPLE. Well, my husband told me he had stayed with a Mr. John Brown of Elm Avenue, Pickleton.

MARTHA. What!

MRS. TEMPLE. So I sent a wire to your husband, to discover whether my husband was telling the truth. (*rises, stands R. of table*)

MARTHA. That's all, is it?

MRS. TEMPLE. That's the simple story, believe me.

MARTHA. (*goes to L. of table R.*) Well, I'm too old a chicken to believe that kind of a fairy tale (*pounding on table*) You can't pull the wool over my eyes. I say you made an appointment with my husband. (*goes up stage*)

MRS. TEMPLE. But consider——

MARTHA. (*continues walk without turning*) Don't speak to me——

MRS. TEMPLE. If you'll only——

MARTHA. (*turns in c.*) Don't speak to me, or I shall forget I'm a lady. From this day my husband and me is strangers—thanks to you, you dressed up doll-faced thing. You can tell John for me he ain't got no Martha now—no Martha now—no Martha now.

(*Exit MARTHA C. to L. Her voice dies away in the distance. The slam of a door is heard. A slight pause.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*looks after her, then crosses to sofa left and sits R. of same*) Fancy this woman being the wife of my husband's friend, Mr. Brown. What strange marriages do take place—and he loves her, too. He told me if she ever doubted him—yes, I remember his very words—"The day we doubt each other we shall become as strangers." How miserable I am!

(*TEMPLE and FULLER are heard laughing outside R. 3 E. They enter, still laughing. TEMPLE first, followed by FULLER.*)

TEMPLE. (*coming down to right corner of sofa*) Ha, ha, ha!—that is excellent. I say, Clara, listen to this joke of Brown's. It's awfully good—will make you roar. (*TEMPLE swings across to R. C. FULLER drops down left of him*) Come now, out with it—off you go.

FULLER. (*aside*) Hadn't you better tell her? You know, it's your wife.

TEMPLE. (*aside*) Nonsense, you tell it much better than I——

FULLER. (*coming to right corner of sofa*) Well, you see, Mrs. Temple, once upon a time there was a very jealous woman, and her husband returned—
(FULLER *looks at* TEMPLE)

MRS. TEMPLE. Please don't tell me, Mr. Brown.

(FULLER *goes over to mantel, takes up paper, reads same*)

TEMPLE. (*crossing to sofa left*) But it will make you laugh.

MRS. TEMPLE. But I don't want to laugh—I would sooner cry.

(FULLER, *after getting paper which is on settee by fire, then drops down to chair left of table right, sits, his back to them.*)

TEMPLE. Now, please don't cry. (*goes around back of sofa and sits on same, left of* MRS. TEMPLE)
Did you speak to Dorothy about the glasses?

MRS. TEMPLE. Yes; she has given them to Captain Sharpe.

TEMPLE. What did she do that for? This places me in a nice position. What explanation can I give to her?

MRS. TEMPLE. Who is "her"?

TEMPLE. Why, the girl in the shop where I bought them.

MRS. TEMPLE. Oh, Jack, I feel very sad to-day; everything has gone wrong. Why didn't I believe you this morning?

TEMPLE. My dear girl, that's all over now.

MRS. TEMPLE. No, it isn't. I have been cruel—wicked.

TEMPLE. Nonsense, you're the best little woman in the world.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*sobbing*) I'm not—I've done such things—I dare not tell you what I've done.

TEMPLE. (*caressing her and talking baby-talk*) Ah! didums do thing ums?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*sobbing*) I've broken up a happy home.

TEMPLE. Well, never mind a little thing like that.

MRS. TEMPLE. You don't think I'm in earnest, but I am. I tell you I've wrecked the happiness of two lives, I have torn asunder two loving hearts. (*rises and crosses c. to FULLER, her hands outstretched*) Can you forgive me?

FULLER. (*who has been looking at paper, turns his head and looks at her, not understanding, then rises*) But, my dear Mrs. Temple, what in the name of fortune has it to do with me?

MRS. TEMPLE. Everything! It's your happiness I have blighted, it is your pardon that I have to beg for. (*turns and goes up stage to centre*)

FULLER. (*smiles, not understanding*) Don't mention it. (*TEMPLE on sofa left, aside to FULLER, pointing to his head*) I'm afraid, Frank, something is wrong. (*FULLER touches his head, turns back to paper*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*coming down c. so that she is below FULLER for his turn*) Listen to me, Mr. Brown. I know that you love your wife dearly.

FULLER. (*who has been standing left of table, looking at paper which rests on table, turns to her*) Why, of course I do—very dearly—(*turns back to paper*).

MRS. TEMPLE. Well, I have seen her—she has only just left me.

FULLER. (*turns to her quickly, expressing great surprise. TEMPLE rises quickly from sofa, dashes across at back of them, and drops down right of table, right*) My wi——oh! Impossible—why, she doesn't even know that I'm here.

MRS. TEMPLE. Yes, she does, and she's furious with you and me.

FULLER. (*smiles*) Furious?

(*MRS. TEMPLE goes toward FULLER, so that she is about four feet from him on a direct line.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. She says you have no Martha now.

(*FULLER turns quickly, looks at her, amazed expression. When first laugh has subsided, FULLER bends forward towards her as though asking an explanation. TEMPLE does some business.*)

FULLER. No what?

MRS. TEMPLE. No Martha.

FULLER. (*turning to front*) I didn't know I had any.

MRS. TEMPLE. I tried hard to explain, but she wouldn't let me. She believes—

FULLER. (*standing by table*) Believes what?

MRS. TEMPLE. That—oh—how can I tell you? (*crosses to sofa left*) That you love me, and that I love you. She won't listen to reason—she's jealous—madly jealous of me—and she said—Oh I dare not tell you what she said. (*she sobs, hysterically, and exits L. 2 E., going around left end of sofa*)

FULLER. (*looks at her in wonderment, then turns slowly and looks at TEMPLE, after laugh to him*) I say, Jack, I've got no Martha now. What does all this mean? Why should my wife call here?

TEMPLE. What does it mean?

FULLER. I don't know. (*FULLER goes a little to left centre, as though thinking, then turns quickly*) Hold on, Jack! It can't be possible that there is such a place as Pickleton?

TEMPLE. (*makes a quick movement towards FULLER, places his hands on the latter's shoulders*) Great Scott! If there is—there is bound to be a street called Elm Avenue, and at least one John Brown is certain to live there. We'll soon find out. (*goes up to desk*)

FULLER. Have you a time-table?

TEMPLE. Yes—here it is. (*brings time-table from desk and reads same, he is down R. C. on line with table. FULLER L. of him*) We'll soon know. FULLER looks over time-table with TEMPLE—reading). Picton—Piddington—Pilmore—Great Scott! As I live—Pickleton! (*pause. Both men are now worried. JACK goes back of table. FULLER in front of table, they meet at right corner of same*)

FULLER. Then the real Mrs. Brown called here?

TEMPLE. And as the telegram is worded, it

would look as if my wife were making an appointment.

FULLER. Why, of course—"Happiness depends on you"—"husband must not know," and the rest. What's to be done? Can't you think of anything to say?

TEMPLE. Yes.

FULLER. What?

TEMPLE. (*aside*) Damn!

(MRS. TEMPLE *enters from L. 2 E., comes down L. end of sofa, sits on same.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. I suppose now that you know all—you will refuse to forgive me?

FULLER. (*front of table R. in a firm tone*) Madam, there are some things impossible to forgive.

MRS. TEMPLE. Ah! Don't say that—see your unhappy wife. (FULLER *shakes his head*) Explain all to her—she will perhaps listen to you.

FULLER. Ah, you don't know her—we shall never again be what we were. (*takes out pocket handkerchief, holds same to eyes, pretending to weep*)

MRS. TEMPLE. Don't say that. (*tearfully*)

FULLER. (*looking up*) Ah, would that we *were*, what we *were*, when we *were*, what we *were*. (*handkerchief again to face*)

TEMPLE. (*R. of FULLER, aside*) I say, you're getting a bit mixed, old man.

MRS. TEMPLE. I know I've been foolish, but don't be hard on me—remember, I am only a woman.

TEMPLE. (*nudging him, aside*) Yes, don't forget, she's only a woman.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*turning her back to them, still seated*) Forgive me!

FULLER. (*handkerchief still to face*) Never—never!

TEMPLE. (*aside*) For goodness' sake, forgive her, and have done with it.

FULLER. (*looks at him, and says "Would you?"*) JACK says "Yes." FULLER starts to go towards MRS. TEMPLE. JACK gives him a push which lands him L. C., a little below desk chair. TEMPLE follows FULLER over and goes a little above R. of him. He still carries time-table) Well, on second thoughts, as I am strong, so will I be merciful. Although you have done me this great wrong, Mrs. Temple, I will try hard to forgive you. Of course, it may be that years will soften my grief—(*puts handkerchief to face. TEMPLE hits him on back with time-table*) Ugh!

(TEMPLE quickly goes L. of FULLER, throws time-table on desk, puts his arm about FULLER, and pats him with his hands as though comforting him.)

MRS. TEMPLE. Don't sob, Mr. Brown; it breaks my heart to hear you.

TEMPLE. (L. of FULLER) No, don't sob, Brown. (*goes back to FULLER to R. of him, then aside*) Come up into my den and have a Scotch highball. (TEMPLE exits R. 4 E. upstairs)

FULLER. No, Jack, I shall never drink again. (*goes up first landing of stairs*) Oh, my poor wife



—would that we were, what we were, when we were what we were. (*exits upstairs R. 4 E.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. It's no use trying to do right—everything goes wrong. (*rises and crosses to table R.*) I don't care what happens to me. (*sits in chair left of table, and picks up hand mirror, looks in same*) What a fright I look. (*arranges hair*) Anybody could see I had been crying—my eyes are like gooseberries. If there's one thing I hate, it is to have a shiny nose. (*pats nose with handkerchief*) There, that's better. Now whatever happens, I'm not going to cry any more.

WIGSON. (*enters C. from L., with card on salver, he comes down C., left of MRS. TEMPLE*) A person to see you, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*taking card*) Who is it, Wigson?

WIGSON. I couldn't make it out, mum, the name's badly written by hand, and there's a large spot of grease in the middle, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*looking closely at card*) Mr.—Why, of course I'll see him.

WIGSON. Very good, mum. (*WIGSON exits C. to L.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*crosses to L. C.*) What can he mean? He only left me a minute ago. (*looks in the direction that FULLER made his exit, R. 4 E.*) He never said he was going out—and why should he send up his card? It wasn't necessary. (*turning card over, reads, as she crosses to extreme right front of table*) "Mr. John Brown, Elm Avenue, Pickleton." (*MRS. TEMPLE drops card on table*)

WIGSON. (*enters C. from L., stands R. of C.*) The person, mum.

(Enter JOHN BROWN c. from L. He comes on quickly and with a self-satisfied manner. He carries a bouquet of garden flowers in his left hand. he smiles at MRS. TEMPLE, and stands up centre, right of desk. He takes off his straw hat with his right hand and places it under his left arm. He seeing that WIGSON remains, points to the L. U. E. with a commanding gesture for WIGSON to go. WIGSON looks at him scornfully and exits L. U. E. As WIGSON passes him, BROWN follows him with his eyes without changing position of his feet. When WIGSON has gone, he turns his head and looks at MRS. TEMPLE over his left shoulder, then waves his hand to her over his head. After laugh, he goes to piano and places hat and bouquet on same, then returns to same position, c.)

BROWN. (*clasping his hands*) At last I realize my dream!

MRS. TEMPLE. (*surprised*) I beg your pardon!

BROWN. Yes—there it is before me, my dream face.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*in astonishment looks behind her*) Your dream face?

BROWN. My precious sweetheart, I'm here at your command. (*advances to her with open arms*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*frightened*) The man is mad! (*crosses hurriedly from R. of stage to lower right corner of sofa left. BROWN is down R. C. on line with chair L. of table*)

BROWN. (*advancing a step to c.*) Who would have thought that we should grow to love each other?

(On the following three speeches, BROWN advances a step on each line. MRS. TEMPLE retreats correspondingly. On the final line "Let us fly together," BROWN makes a quick movement and goes up right of sofa and back of same. MRS. TEMPLE goes up left of sofa as though to escape through door L.)

BROWN. My verbena! (*advances*) My hyacinth! (*advances*) My musk! (*advances*) Let us fly together.

(BROWN is now directly back of R. of sofa, his hands outstretched on back of same.)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*stands left corner of sofa, and strokes BROWN'S left arm as she speaks. He is pleased and assumes a silly expression*) There—there—don't get violent—let me ring for WIGSON.

BROWN. What for?

MRS. TEMPLE. Why, to ask him to bring you a glass of sherry.

BROWN. (*quickly, going to front of sofa, and sits*) Right, my sunflower! (MRS. TEMPLE crosses quickly behind sofa, and table, right, and rings bell on door R. 2 E.). I'll drink the health of my fragrant rosebud. (MRS. TEMPLE, after ringing bell, now goes down R. of table)

MRS. TEMPLE. Why, yes—surely I know that face.

BROWN. Ha, ha, ha! (*laughs*) You will have your little joke.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*advances to front of table*) You are one of the assistants at Madame Clotine's—you

have dressed my hair several times.

BROWN. Yes, and didn't I do it nicely?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*picks up card from table where she has previously thrown it*) Is this your card? (MRS. TEMPLE *throws card back of table*)

BROWN. Yes, birdie, that's my card—John Brown, Elm Avenue, Pickleton. You didn't send me a telegraph to call—of course not; you haven't taken a fancy to me—oh, certainly not.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*in great anger*) At first I charitably inferred that you were merely a lunatic.

(WIGSON *enters c. from l.*)

BROWN. Here, I say—give over.

MRS. TEMPLE. But now I understand. (*to WIGSON*) Tell your master to come here at once.

WIGSON. Very good, mum. (WIGSON *exits upstairs R. 4 E. BROWN gets very nervous*)

BROWN. Here, I say—what's the joke?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*crossing up stage to left, above desk*) You'll understand when my husband appears.

BROWN. (*jumping up and crossing R. by table*) What will he do?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*coming down stage between desk and piano to left upper corner of sofa*) I should say—he will probably throw you downstairs.

BROWN. Oh, will he? (*aside*) I don't like this; I'm off!

(BROWN *rushes up stage, and as he gets c. is met by FULLER and TEMPLE who enter from upstairs R. 4 E. BROWN falls into their arms; they*

LER is R. of BROWN, TEMPLE L. of him, MRS. TEMPLE L.)

TEMPLE. Hullo! You're in a hurry.

BROWN. (*frightened*) I am.

TEMPLE (*turning c. to MRS. TEMPLE*) Who and what is this fellow?

MRS. TEMPLE. This man is an impostor, who pretends that he has received a telegram from me inviting him here.

FULLER AND TEMPLE. You scoundrel!

(*They advance F. of L. of BROWN, as though going to strike him. BROWN in great fear raises his right hand to FULLER, his left to TEMPLE.*)

BROWN. Ore at a time, gentlemen, please—

(TEMPLE goes to R. corner of sofa.)

FULLER. (*going to front of table*) Where is the telegram?

BROWN. It's at home, sir—in my little writing-desk.

MRS. TEMPLE. In your little writing-desk? Why don't you speak the truth? If you have the telegram, you either picked it up on the train or stole it from that gentleman.

TEMPLE. Why, you!

(TEMPLE makes a threatening movement towards BROWN, who makes a detour across stage to left of sofa. As he goes to left, MRS. TEMPLE goes up left by sofa, crossing behind to right upper

corner of same where she joins JACK. As BROWN swings across, his eyes are on TEMPLE, his back to audience. He speaks as he crosses.)

BROWN. I never stole nothing, Miss—I mean, mum. I'm a humble hairdresser—but I'm honest. I got the telegraph this morning at my house.

TEMPLE. *(left arm about MRS. TEMPLE)* Where is your house?

BROWN. It's on the table. No, no, no—I mean the address is on the card, sir, and the card is on the table.

FULLER. *(picks up card from table. TEMPLE joins him. Aside to TEMPLE as he reads card)* As I thought, it's the real John Brown!

MRS. TEMPLE. *(goes to R. C. and joins FULLER and TEMPLE. She is close to JACK L. of him and a little up stage so that the men can see BROWN when they turn. At the same time, BROWN, who is pretty badly frightened, goes around left of sofa to back of same, looking for means of escape. His hands are outstretched on back of sofa, his head turned to left)* Jack, this man has forged that card, and obtained admittance to this house under false pretences.

TEMPLE AND FULLER. *(angrily)* Why, you scoundrel!

(They turn suddenly on BROWN. He is so startled that, still holding back of sofa, he drops on his knees and then up again, down and up.)

MRS. TEMPLE. *(crossing left. She goes to upper R end of sofa)* Do you still dare to assert—

(BROWN dashes around left end of sofa to R. corner, front of same.)

TEMPLE. Yes, do you still dare to assert? (*goes over L. C. near sofa*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*going back of sofa to L. of same*) That you are John Brown of Elm Avenue, Pickleton?

BROWN. I wouldn't deceive you, mum; I am.

MRS. TEMPLE. Then let me tell you, you miserable little impostor, that you stand in the presence of the man you've had the audacity to impersonate—down on your knees.

TEMPLE. (*angrily*) Down on your knees!

(BROWN, thoroughly frightened, drops on his knees, facing MRS. TEMPLE.)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*pointing to FULLER*) For that gentleman is Mr. John Brown.

BROWN. (*still on knees, turns and looks at FULLER in a dazed manner*) You John Brown?

FULLER. (*looking to front and folding his arms*) That is my name, sir.

BROWN. Of Elm Avenue, Pickleton?

FULLER. (*without looking at him*) Of Elm Avenue, Pickleton.

BROWN. The little house with green door and a brass knocker?

FULLER. (*face to front*) That's where I live, sir.

BROWN. (*very feebly*) Am I dreaming? And may I ask, sir, the Christian name of my wife—I mean your wife—no, no, I mean our wife.

FULLER. (*turns slowly, looks at BROWN, picks up paper from table, and says calmly*) Martha. (*then turns to front, looking at paper. BROWN, who has been leaning forward towards FULLER, turns slowly towards sofa and completely collapses on same*)

TEMPLE. (*comes to FULLER, R. C., aside*) What the dickens shall we do with him?

FULLER. (*smiling, aside to TEMPLE*) We'll get him in the next room and frighten the life out of him. (*TEMPLE goes up R. 3 E.*)

FULLER. (*change of tone*) Look here, sir. (*to BROWN*) This is a very serious matter. (*goes up L. of TEMPLE*) Go in that room, sir. (*to MRS. TEMPLE*) Mrs. Temple, we'll make the scoundrel confess all—we'll—(*BROWN rises and drops on sofa L.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*lower corner of sofa left*) Punish him as he deserves, but don't injure him seriously.

BROWN. Oh, thank you, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. There now—you are not to be injured seriously.

BROWN. Only a tooth or two knocked out, I suppose. (*goes up so that he is left of FULLER, speaking as he walks*) You hear, gentlemen, I'm not to be injured seriously.

TEMPLE. (*at door R. 3 E.*) Don't be alarmed, dearest; we'll soon find out the truth—shan't be long.

FULLER. In there, sir! (*pointing right*)

BROWN. (*very frightened*) All right, sir—I'll obey you, sir.

TEMPLE AND FULLER. Come on, sir—hurry up no delay, etc. One, two, three!

(FULLER seizes BROWN and throws him across to TEMPLE, who pushes him off R. 3 E., the two men following. BROWN'S voice is heard above the others, saying "One at a time, gentlemen, please." N. B. Leave door open.)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*crossing to R. by table*) This man must have stolen that telegram. One can see at a glance that he's a thief.

MARTHA. (*outside L. C.*) In or out—I'm coming up.

WIGSON. (*outside L. C.*) If you'll only wait a moment.

MARTHA. (*as she enters*) I won't wait a second.

(*Enter WIGSON and MARTHA C. from L. She is forcing her way in, and he is trying to prevent her. As they reach C. up stage, she pushes WIGSON off to R.*)

WIGSON. (*in disgust*) Very sorry, mum, but this party forced the way up.

MRS. TEMPLE. You may go, Wigson.

WIGSON. Exactly, mum! (*he brushes the sleeve of his coat, then looks at MARTHA disdainfully, and exits C. to L.*)

MARTHA. (*coming down L. C.*) Mrs. Temple, I've shown myself to be a perfect lady—no one has ever heard me raise my voice.

MRS. TEMPLE. Well, there's no occasion for it, I'm sure.

MARTHA. Well, you're a cool minx. Your man tells me that my lovin' husband is still in this house.

MRS. TEMPLE. He is, I'm happy to say.

MARTHA. (*goes L. front of sofa*) Mrs. Temple, the time has come for him to decide between me and you—

MRS. TEMPLE. I'm sure that question has never entered his mind.

MARTHA. Then it's about time it did.

MRS. TEMPLE. Why, only this morning he told me that you had never doubted him. You've never doubted him before, have you?

MARTHA. You mean I've never *caught* him before.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*coming to c.*) But my good woman—

MARTHA. I'm not your good woman.

MRS. TEMPLE. Pardon me—I should say Mrs. Brown, your husband is, I feel certain, the soul of honor—he is what I term a good man.

MARTHA. There's no such thing as a good man.

MRS. TEMPLE. Oh, don't say that; remember he's the father of Alphonse and Gaston. (*goes up stage to window c.*)

MARTHA. (*aside*) She's balmy. A little light in the head.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*comes down c.*) As I was the innocent cause of your misunderstanding, it is but right I should be the means of your reconciliation. Let me send your husband to you.

MARTHA. But I don't want to see him.

MRS. TEMPLE. Oh, yes, you do. (*goes up, looks off R. 3 E.*) There he is now. Mr. Brown—won't

you kindly step this way. (MRS. TEMPLE *goes a little to R.*)

MARTHA. (*down L. front of sofa*) Well, I won't look at him. (*turns her back to MRS. TEMPLE and faces to front*)

(FULLER *enters from R. 3 E., he comes to R. of MRS. TEMPLE.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*placing her hand on FULLER'S arm. They are both up stage R. C., just above the arm-chair*) There she is—(*pointing with left hand to MARTHA. FULLER expresses surprise*) Recollect she is annoyed, excited—but, oh, remember she—she is a woman. (FULLER *comes down stage R. C. MARTHA turns and looks fixedly at FULLER, he doing the same. MRS. TEMPLE comes down stage C.*) Don't, please, look at each other like that. (*aside to FULLER R. C.*) Be the first to make up (*aloud*) Offer her your hand.

(FULLER, *smilingly, crosses to MARTHA and offers his hand. MARTHA looks at him scornfully, and turns away to left.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. Shake hands, do—I beg of you.

MARTHA. (*without turning*) I'm an easy-going lady, but I haven't yet started the habit of shaking hands with perfect strangers.

FULLER. (*shrugs his shoulders and crosses back to right*) You see—she won't.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*going over to MARTHA, L. C.*) No—no, you must not call him a stranger.

FULLER. Pardon me, Mrs. Temple, but I am a stranger.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*going to R. C., aside to FULLER*) Don't be cruel to her. (*crossing over to MARTHA*) He doesn't mean that. (*crossing back to FULLER*) Offer your hand again.

FULLER. All right. (*crosses to MARTHA again, offering his hand. MARTHA turns away*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*dropping down R. C.*) You see, he is making the first advances.

MARTHA. (*turning to FULLER*) And pray, sir, who may you be? I don't happen to know you.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*crossing front of table to door R. 2 E.*) I see it's no use my staying here. I'll leave you alone, but I entreat you for the last time to become reconciled. (*FULLER does not understand. He goes to R. C.*) Remember what you are to each other. (*FULLER looks at MARTHA*) Kiss and be friends.

(*Exit R. 2 E.*)

MARTHA. (*crossing over to L. of FULLER*) Kiss and be friends. Look here, sir, I only ask for information—but is it the usual custom in upper circles for perfect strangers to kiss each other before they've been introduced?

FULLER. (*very quietly*) Always. It is invariably done in the best society; of course, you know, by the way, the lady always begins the game. (*FULLER presents his left cheek to her. MARTHA is pleased and smiles*)

MARTHA. Oh, go 'long with you. (*pushes him away in a coquettish manner with her arm, then*

turns her back to him, crossing to L. C.)

FULLER. (*enjoying the situation, follows her over a little back of her. They are just below R. corner of sofa left*) Tell me, my good lady, what is your name?

MARTHA. Mrs. John Brown, Christian name Martha.

FULLER. (*laughs, and crosses up to right*) Now I understand.

MARTHA. You do, do you?

FULLER. Yes.

MARTHA. Well, I don't.

FULLER. (*up stage near arm-chair*) Do you know it was pre-ordained that we should meet? (*comes down L. C. to MARTHA, putting his arm about her, and speaking in the most phlegmatic manner*) I love you as I have seldom loved before—I love you with a fire that is consuming my very soul—Mrs. John Brown—Christian name Martha—love me, or I shall die.

MARTHA. (*very coquettishly*) You men are all alike. (*drawing a little away from him, looking in his face*) You love us when we're young and beautiful; but will you love us when we're old and homely? (*faces front at end of speech*)

FULLER. (*looking at her*) Well, of course, you'll grow older, but you'll never grow homelier; but that makes no difference, for my love for you is too transcendental to be affected by mere materiality.

MARTHA. (*not quite understanding*) Just so. Do you know, I rather like you.

bring him down stage between them to C. FULLER.

FULLER. Of course you do. Who could help liking me?

MARTHA. Do you know why I like you?

FULLER. (*laughs*) Because I'm so beautiful?

MARTHA. No.

FULLER. Well, I've got a second guess. Because I'm so good? (*turns to MARTHA*)

MARTHA. Yes.— (*FULLER smiles*) Because you're so simple. (*FULLER changes expression*) Something seems to tell me you couldn't tell a lie. (*FULLER smiles and looks at her quickly*) It would just break your heart to tell a fib, wouldn't it?

FULLER. It would. Just look into my honest hazel eyes. (*FULLER attempts to put his arms around her*)

MARTHA. (*pushing him away playfully*) There, there, quit your nonsense. (*FULLER goes up stage a little c. near arm-chair*)

MARTHA. (*follows him up and takes his left arm*) By the way, now that we're so nice and friendly like, what's your name?

FULLER. (*in a mysterious manner*) You mustn't ask me that. That is the one secret of my most unhappy life. But remember, whatever happens—I am always your friend. Now, is there anything I can do for you?

MARTHA. (*goes down L. c.*) No—oh, yes.

FULLER. (*goes to door R. 3 E.*) What?

MARTHA. You can tell my husband I'm waiting here to give him a bit of my mind. (*goes over left from L. end of sofa*)

FULLER. (*behind settee, at door R. 3 E.*) I suppose he knows what a bit of your mind means?

MARTHA. (*goes around left of sofa to back of same*) Stop, perhaps you'd better not tell him his wife wants to see him—put him off the scent.

FULLER. (*leaning hands on back of settee*) I don't like to do that, Martha. It's too much like deception. I'll just ask him to come in this room. (*he goes back a step towards door*) Good-bye, Martha, good-bye. And if perchance we should never meet again, think of me kindly sometimes—not as who or what I am, but as what I might have been if you had only been somebody else.

(*Exit FULLER, R. 3 E.*)

MARTHA. (*sits on sofa L., looks after him, there is a slight pause before she speaks*) I don't really believe he loves me—he said “If I'd only been somebody else”—he means if I wasn't married to Brown. Oh, why did I ever marry a hairdresser's assistant, when I might have married a handsome gent like that?

BROWN. (*outside R. 3 E.*) Oh, dear, one at a time, gentlemen, please.

MARTHA. (*goes up, looks off R. C*) He's coming. (*hides behind curtains, right of opening C. below staircase*)

BROWN. (*enters R. 3 E., his collar and necktie are hanging on one side, his head is all ruffled, he speaks quickly. As he crosses down to sofa, MARTHA comes from back, and follows him down on his right*) What I've been through. Those two gentlemen proved that I'm not myself—that my name isn't John Brown—and I'm almost ready to believe them.

MARTHA. (*by this time is down L. C. BROWN's face is turned a little to left so he does not see her*) Johnny!

BROWN. (*turns quickly to her*) Martha! Oh, lor'! (*collapses on sofa*)

(MARTHA goes to him. She stands at R. upper corner of sofa left. She is very angry, but tries to control herself. She assumes a mild tone at the beginning of scene, but her temper gets the better of her, and towards the end she loses control of herself.)

MARTHA. Now, my dearest, darling husband, I'm longing to hear what my precious has to say.

BROWN. (*curled up on L. end of sofa and very nervous*) Well—the fact is—I mean—Oh, Martha, I'll confess—

MARTHA. (*with meaning*) You'd better.

BROWN. This morning Mrs. Temple sent for me—

MARTHA. I know she did—I found the telegraph.

BROWN. I only came because I thought the lady wanted her hair touched up a bit.

MARTHA. And do you think I'll believe your lyin' story. I told you more than once, if you kept fallin' in love with every woman who looked crooked at you, I was going to quit you—now I'm goin' to keep my word. (*she pounds her hand on right arm of sofa, then looks R. 3 E., where FULLER made his exit*) I won't have to go far to find a man who will love me.

BROWN. (*on sofa, very frightened*) Martha, what are you going to do?

MARTHA. (*Crosses to extreme right*) I don't know, I'm busting! (*when MARTHA reaches R. corner of table R., she turns and sees WIGSON, who*



enters from L. U. E., and comes to L. C., at back. MARTHA advances up stage to R. C. She is on line with table) Tell Mrs. Temple I want to see her at once.

WIGSON. (*resenting the question*) Mrs. Temple is here.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*enters from R. 2 E., remains at mantel*) Tell my husband I wish to see him immediately.

WIGSON. (*starts to go R. 3 E., MARTHA goes to C.*) Yes, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. Have you sent for the police?

WIGSON. Yes, mum.

(WIGSON *exits R. 3 E.*)

BROWN. (*down by sofa*) The police! Oh, lor'! (*he goes around left of sofa to door L. 2 E., trying to escape*)

(FULLER and TEMPLE *enter from R. 3 E.*)

MARTHA. (C.) You've been up to a nice little game, haven't you? (*pointing to BROWN*) This man tells me that he called when your husband happened to be home and you deny the appointment—you even deny the telegraph.

(MARTHA *crosses to R. FULLER and TEMPLE remain back of settee for a minute. FULLER points out MARTHA to TEMPLE. FULLER then crosses left at back. At the same time BROWN comes up stage between desk and piano. He sees him and tries to get out of his way by running up*

to window. TEMPLE goes down L. C. in front of desk. FULLER goes between desk and piano, and drops down L. of TEMPLE. MRS. TEMPLE comes to C. MARTHA is down R. C. at L. corner of table. After the men are on the down stage positions, BROWN crosses at back and drops down between settee and arm-chair and around chair R. of table to front of same.)

MRS. TEMPLE. The person is telling a base falsehood—he is an adventurer who obtained admittance here for the purpose of blackmailing an innocent gentleman who never did any harm. (*goes up C.*)

FULLER. (*who is L. of TEMPLE, puts his R. arm over TEMPLE'S R. shoulder and says in an aside*) I say, Jack, we've got to get the old woman out of the house—or the game's up.

TEMPLE. (*right of FULLER and aside to him*) We've been fools—we might have known she'd have found out the truth.

FULLER. (*aside*) Don't give in yet; play the hand out—(*goes back to sofa L.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*coming down C.*) It was foolish of me not to have discovered this imposture before—but there is still time for me to unmask the deception of a creature who is totally without truth or honor. (*goes up C.*)

(*MRS. TEMPLE is very angry. TEMPLE follows her up stage, left of her, endeavoring to reason with her. She refuses to listen.*)

BROWN. (*aside to MARTHA*) Martha—you ain't goin' to let 'em take me to prison?

MARTHA. (*aside to BROWN*) Ain't I—well—you just watch me—I'll get even with you for breaking' my heart.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*coming down c. TEMPLE comes down L. c.*) Mrs. Brown—notwithstanding your rudness to me, I received you kindly, because you were the wife of my husband's friend. (*FULLER and TEMPLE exchange looks*) But consideration has its limitations, and from this day forth, I refuse to receive you in my house.

FULLER. (*comes down L. corner front of sofa*) But Mrs. Temple—

MRS. TEMPLE. (*crossing left to front of sofa—MARTHA comes to c.*) It is noble of you, Mr. Brown, but I request that you offer your arm to your wife and escort her from my house.

(*FULLER and BROWN cross to MARTHA c., and offer their arms. FULLER his right, BROWN his left. MRS. TEMPLE goes front of sofa after FULLER crosses c.*)

MARTHA. (*takes FULLER's arm and smiles at him—she refuses BROWN—and pushes him off down R.*) Go away—I don't know you.

(*FULLER and TEMPLE laugh.*)

BROWN. (*coming up to her*) Martha—

MARTHA. I never saw you before in all my life. (*turns and smiles sweetly at FULLER still holding his arm*)

WIGSON. (*enters R. 3 E. comes down R. corner of table*) The officer, mum. He's waiting at the side door.

FULLER. Oh, Wigson.

WIGSON. Yes, sir.

FULLER. Tell the officer to take this man in charge—I'll appear against him.

BROWN. (*going down to WIGSON*) I didn't do nothing—I'm only a humble—

(*MARTHA follows BROWN a little down right.*)

FULLER. (*going down to MARTHA*) Martha! Martha! Since you're not welcome here, we'll go. (*takes her hand*)

(*Music P. P.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*who is left in front of sofa*, Don't say that, Mr. Brown—you are my husband's friend—you are always welcome.

FULLER. (*taking MARTHA'S hand, and going up a little c. to speak to MRS. TEMPLE.*) Mrs. Temple—remember that husband and wife are one—If Martha goes—I go with her. (*takes her hand and places it in his arm*)

(*He quickly swings her around to left, they go up stage and exit c. to L. U. E. as curtain falls. WIGSON places his left arm on BROWN'S shoulder, and points off R. 2 E. TEMPLE is endeavoring to comfort MRS. TEMPLE, who sinks on sofa. The act must be played very rapidly—from the lines "I'll show you—I'm busting!"*)

(*MUSIC FORTE as CURTAIN descends quickly.*)

ACT III.

(The same—Evening. Lights all subdued. Electric lamp near piano, and lamp on table, also side brackets lighted.—Red mediums in first borders and foots. Foots to come up to white—no change in other lights—except window—where the amber light is changed in this act to blue. Electrolier has amber globes to soften the light.)

DOROTHY is discovered seated at piano, singing "The Message of Violets" from "The Prince of Pilsen." After she has sung four bars, the curtain rises. After a second, and during song, WIGSON enters followed by CAPTAIN SHARPE. WIGSON is about to announce the CAPTAIN, who prevents him by placing his hand on WIGSON'S arm as though unwilling to interrupt the music. WIGSON bows and exits R. 4 E. CAPTAIN SHARPE comes down quietly to piano—unobserved by DOROTHY. As she finishes the refrain the CAPTAIN speaks.)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. That's very pretty.

DOROTHY. *(starting up L. of piano stool)* Why, how you startled me—I didn't know anyone was listening—Did Wigson announce you?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. No—I wouldn't let him.—
(CAPTAIN *is R. of piano*—DOROTHY *L. of it*) break the charm—the music was so plaintive—and the lights were so low.

DOROTHY. (*going to door L. 2 E.*) Yes, I think a little too low. (*SHE turns button which throws on electrolier—Lights up*) Besides I want to see if you look nervous. Oh, dear, I think men must be awfully brave to go to war—I know I couldn't do it. (*SHE sits right end of sofa*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*coming down L. c.*) But woman has her particular duty, Dorothy. She is the incentive to man's success—with thought of you to inspire me, who knows, I may return with a Victoria cross.

DOROTHY. Wouldn't it be nice if soldiers didn't have to go to war—suppose you should be wounded?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*takes a few steps towards c.*) I don't suppose you'd care.

DOROTHY. That remark was quite uncalled for, Mr. Sharpe, I'm not going to give you your title again until you've begged my pardon.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*crossing to R., upper corner of sofa, so that he is a little above her*) I beg your pardon. (*taking out letter*) Dorothy, that is the only letter of yours that I ever wanted to keep, the one you wrote me from Nice. (*DOROTHY takes letter, looks at address, and is about to return it. CAPTAIN stops her*) Won't you read it once more? (*DOROTHY takes out letter, and glances over it*) You wrote in that letter that you loved me, won't you say it again?

DOROTHY. (*rises nervously and crosses to right*)

Well, it's awfully easy to write, but it's dreadfully hard to say.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*remains R. corner of sofa*) It isn't hard for me to say.

DOROTHY. (*is R. C. a little L. of chair*) Because you've said it so often to other girls?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*coming to C.*) No, Dorothy, you are the only girl I have ever truly loved—Won't you let me take the promise with me, that if I return with honor, I may claim you as my wife? (*going towards her*)

DOROTHY. (*turning away from him*) That would be equivalent to an engagement, wouldn't it?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*close to her*) It only needs one little word from you, dearest, you know what it is, won't you say it?

DOROTHY. (*turning around slowly—as she speaks the line she lets her head fall on his head*) Yes.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*taking her in his arms*) Dorothy! **This is good-bye, dearest.** (*kissing her*) You have made me so happy that I can hardly believe my good fortune. (*taking ring off his finger*) Wear this until I return, and replace it with another. (*places ring on engagement finger, then raises the hand to his lips—kissing it*)

(FULLER *enters L. 2 E., in evening dress. DOROTHY sees FULLER and quickly draws her hand away.*)

DOROTHY. (*aside to CAPTAIN*) Oh! There's Mr. Brown! (*she goes down right to front of table*)

FULLER. (*stops a few feet from door*) I beg your pardon, Miss Dorothy, practicing again? (*he looks at piano*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (c.) Oh, Mr. Ful—I mean Mr. Brown—(FULLER *drops down L.*) May I ask if you are fond of sports, Mr. Brown?

FULLER. (*below R. end of sofa*) I'm a iittle inclined that way.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Go in much for yachting?

FULLER. I'm a regular sea dog.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Care for the races?

FULLER. Never miss a meeting.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*laughs—to DOROTHY*) It's all right. (DOROTHY *turns to table—back to audience—retaining this position till she hands glasses to the CAPTAIN. To FULLER*) MR. BROWN, (DOROTHY *turns quickly and hands glasses to him. He crosses to FULLER, L. C.*) We want you to accept these glasses, as a small token of our mutual esteem and gratitude. (*offers glasses to FULLER*)

FULLER. (*hesitates, then takes them*) Oh, I say now, you're trying to make it appear as if I had done something and—

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*crossing to right and taking DOROTHY'S hand*) Don't you consider that this is something—you've made it possible for me to win the dearest little girl in the world.

FULLER. (*pleased*) Congratulations—Then it's settled?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Well, not quite.

DOROTHY. (*quickly*) But I thought we were engaged?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*turns to her*) Oh, yes—that part's all right—but I haven't spoken to Mr. Temple yet. (CAPTAIN *comes to C. a little up stage—but faces front so as not to observe JACK'S entrance*) I shall follow your advice, Mr. Brown.

(Enter TEMPLE L. 2 E.)

If Jack still withholds his consent—

TEMPLE. (L. upper corner of sofa) Which he does. (FULLER goes up and over right centre near arm-chair)

DOROTHY. (crossing to right of sofa. CAPTAIN SHARPE goes R. by table) Oh Jack—(sobs)

TEMPLE. Now, please don't let us have any tears—I hate tears. (TEMPLE goes up by piano)

FULLER. (coming down L. of CAPTAIN, and speaking to him aside) Captain, now's your chance. (aloud and crossing over to DOROTHY L. and offering her his arm) Miss Dorothy, will you allow me to escort you to the library—I don't think the Captain will be long. (DOROTHY takes his left arm—he speaks as they go up R.) Probably Jack had good and sufficient reasons for not wishing you to marry the Captain. (they exit R. 4 E.—below stairs)

TEMPLE. (coming to c.) By the way, Sharpe—I wish you'd let me have those glasses that Dorothy gave you.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (going to R. of TEMPLE) I haven't them.

TEMPLE. Who has them then?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. I presume Mr. Brown, as I gave them to him.

TEMPLE. No, you don't understand me—I'm alluding to the field-glasses—you know—"They're off." (putting his hands to his eyes as though looking through glasses)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Yes, I know, I gave them to Mr. Brown.

TEMPLE. You gave the field glasses to Mr. Brown?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Yes.

TEMPLE. I wish you'd get them from him.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. I can't very well ask him to return them when I gave them to him as a gift.

TEMPLE. No, of course not—if you gave them to him as a gift—you can't very well ask him to return them.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. No.

TEMPLE. No.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. No.

TEMPLE. I said "NO"! (*aside*) This is pleasant. (*He turns and crosses back of sofa—going towards door L. 2 E.*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*going up L. so that he stands near desk chair*) One moment, Mr. Temple. (*TEMPLE stops above L. upper corner of sofa*) I want to have a talk with you on a subject which may affect the happiness of two young lives—you have the right, as her guardian to refuse your consent to my marriage with Dorothy—but I at least have the right to know why—What is your objection to me?

TEMPLE. (*coming down L. of sofa*) No particular objection, I'll think it over. (*sits on sofa*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*coming down a step L. c.*) But I'm leaving England to-morrow to be gone a whole year. (*this spoken quietly*)

TEMPLE. Well, it's time enough to talk it over when you come back.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*raising voice a little*) But I want your consent before I leave.

TEMPLE. My decision is final. (*TEMPLE rises*)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*a little louder*) Will nothing make you change your views?

TEMPLE. Nothing. (TEMPLE goes to left of sofa *up* to door L. 2 E.)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*in loud voice*) Not even the married lady in the car?

TEMPLE. (*stops and turns, expressing great fear*) Sh! Not so loud—

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Perhaps I'd better tell Mrs. Temple all I know. (CAPTAIN starts to go to R. 4 E.)

TEMPLE. (*coming to L. end of sofa*) Hold on, Sharpe—you're so impetuous—Come here. (*he beckons to Sharpe and crosses in front of sofa to C. SHARPE drops down R. of him*) I want to have a little chat with you about your marriage with Dorothy. (SHARPE, who faced front on coming down stage, now turns and faces TEMPLE.)

CAPTAIN SHARPE. Then you consent?

TEMPLE. (*putting his hands on SHARPE's shoulders in an affectionate manner*) Why, of course, I consent. There never was any question about it. (SHARPE turns to front with *pleased expression*) I always liked you, Sharpe. (*putting his right arm about SHARPE's neck*) Dear old Sharpe! (*with a forced laugh*) We're almost related now?

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*smiling*) Yes!

TEMPLE. In fact brother-in-law!

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*smiling*) Yes!

(Both men are now laughing, CAPTAIN SHARPE enjoying it—TEMPLE assuming his merriment.

SHARPE still faces to front—TEMPLE still having his arm about him. During the laugh TEMPLE suddenly stops—and changes his ex-

pression, suggesting the thought that he would like to strangle the CAPTAIN.

SHARPE continues his laugh, but suddenly turns and catches TEMPLE—who immediately changes expression to merriment and joins in the laughter.

SHARPE'S turn is timed by TEMPLE pressing his shoulder when it is ready for the CAPTAIN to turn.

After laugh has subsided TEMPLE puts his arm through SHARPE'S—leads him to R. C. a step—looks about before speaking.)

TEMPLE. Now not a word about that married lady business to Mrs. Temple.

CAPTAIN SHARPE. (*going up R.*) She'll never hear a word from me—now to tell her the good news. Dorothy—Dorothy. (CAPTAIN SHARPE *exits R. 4 E. below stairs*)

TEMPLE. (*c. slight pause.*) There is great satisfaction in doing an act of kindness—especially when you don't have to. (TEMPLE *crosses to sofa*)

(*Enter WIGSON R. 4 E. below stairs.*)

WIGSON. (*coming down c.*) Did you ring, sir?

TEMPLE. (*sits on sofa*) Is dinner ready?

WIGSON. (*down L. c.*) No, sir—dinner won't be ready for half an hour. (*starts to go, then stops*) That reminds me—as I'm going to-morrow, out of compliment to me, cook has allowed me to select

dishes for dinner to-day, that I'm particularly fond of—we're going to have a delightful "Gee-goat," sir.

TEMPLE. Would you mind translating "Gee-Goat" for me, Wigson.

WIGSON. Certainly not, sir—"Ge-goat" is the French for a leg of mutton.

TEMPLE. Oh, I see, you mean "Gigot."

(*N. B. Pronounced Ji-go.*)

WIGSON. That's what I said, sir, and then there's sweets, a bloomangy and coffee ar lar Turk—which means coffee strong enough to blow your head off.

TEMPLE. Thank you, Wigson—now I know all about it.

WIGSON. Speaking of Bloomangy, sir, reminds me of my great Aunt Euphresyne—she's dead, at present, sir—but when she was alive she weighed 400 pounds, and when she walked she wobbled like a jelly, and she wobbled and wobbled—

TEMPLE. Get out.

WIGSON. That's just what I was going to do, sir. (*WIGSON goes up c.*)

TEMPLE. By the way, Wigson, where's Mr. Fuller?

WIGSON. (*looking off R. 4 E.*) Mr. Fuller is here, sir.

(*Enter FULLER R. 4 E. below stairs, comes down to chair left of table—right. He picks up paper from table—but does not sit. After FULLER is down stage—WIGSON comes down center.*)

And seeing Mr. Fuller sir, reminds me of my Uncle Theophilus—he was an ar-cheetect.

TEMPLE. (*rising angrily and pointing off*) Oh, go to the devil!

WIGSON. (*quickly*) That's just what—(*then realizing what he has said—he goes up indignantly and exits quickly* L. U. E.)

TEMPLE. (*crossing over R. C. to L. of FULLER, close to him*) I say, Fuller, I wish you'd let me have those glasses the Captain gave you.

FULLER. (*who is standing L. of table, facing front, and holding newspaper, answers carelessly*) Why, of course.

TEMPLE. (*turns and crosses to L. C.*) Thanks.

FULLER. You mean—loan them to you?

TEMPLE. No, I mean give them to me.

FULLER. (*in a delicate way, not wishing to hurt TEMPLE'S feelings*) Oh, well, I say, old chap, that's different. I want to explain—you see the glasses were a present to me, and naturally under the circumstances I value them. (*sitting in chair L. of table*) A certain amount of sentiment—

TEMPLE. (*coming to L. of FULLER*) Well, people have no right to give away what doesn't belong to them. I didn't have an opportunity to tell you this morning, but those glasses belong to the "married lady in the car." (*TEMPLE returns to C. FULLER whistles C.*) I found them in my pocket, and never expecting to see her again, gave them to Dorothy, to avoid explanation; then the party turns up and demands her property, so I told her to be in a cab in front of the house at nine o'clock to-night.

FULLER. (*quietly*) Oh, going up in the wheel again?

TEMPLE. (*goes L., near sofa*) No, I'm not going up in the wheel again. (*sits*) I'm going to give her the glasses, of course.

FULLER. All right, I'll fetch them out to her.

TEMPLE. No, you won't. As I did the borrowing, I'll do the returning. Where are they?

FULLER. (*looking at paper*) In my suit-case, upstairs.

TEMPLE. I shall be thankful when this day is over (*sits on sofa*) Frank, did you ever stop to think what a wonderful thing a fib is?

FULLER. (*without looking up*) I never have time to think of them; I'm always too busy telling them.

TEMPLE. Mine was first of all a poor, little insignificant fib, then it grew in size and weight and it kept on growing until at last it expanded into a thing of manifest importance—so important that it produced anger, jealousy, hatred and fear. It sways the destiny of men and women, and as it goes along on its mad career, it creates other fibs—dozens of them, and they in turn breed and multiply—a legion is produced, all offsprings of my first original tiny fib.

FULLER. (*looks at TEMPLE steadily during this speech, then turns away at end and says quickly*) That's a very pretty thought. But do you think your little fib has caused any real harm?

TEMPLE. Think? I'm certain of it. It has broken up a happy home. I feel very sorry for the Browns, particularly for Mrs. Brown, for she was so terribly in earnest.

FULLER. (*places paper on his crossed knee, then folds his arms*) Well, of course if you feel that way

about it, you had better go and tell your wife everything. I shall feel very sorry for you if you do, for I must say, without flattery, Jack, that for a beginner you show great promise. You have a decided talent that only requires to be cultivated. Now, you want to practice—well, we'll say a couple of hours a day, and in six months you might enter the ranks of the professionals. (*looks at paper*)

TEMPLE. Thanks, old fellow, for your good opinion, which, coming from you, is indeed high praise. I certainly think I have some talent, though I shall never hope to be the accomplished liar that you are. (*FULLER laughs, enjoying the joke*) What did you do with Martha?

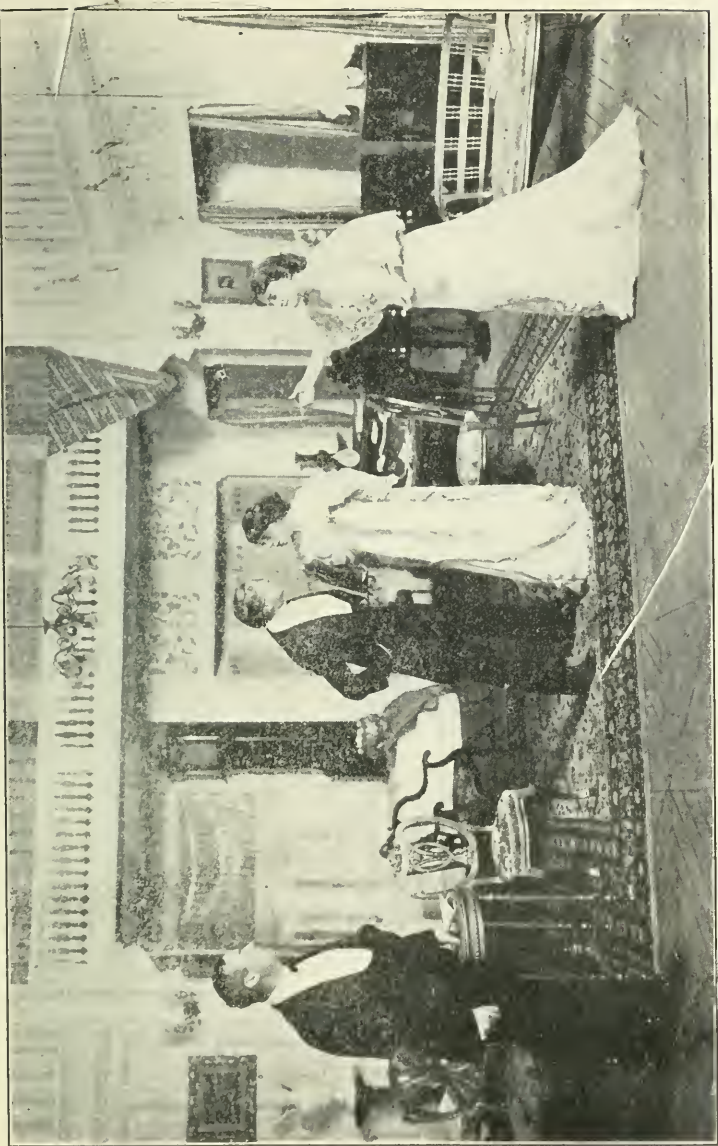
FULLER. (*looking to the front*) I dropped Martha the first corner, then I rushed to the police station and told the sergeant I should not press the charge against Brown, so they let him go. (*turns head towards TEMPLE*) Oh, by the way, how did you square me with your wife? (*looks at TEMPLE during his entire next speech*)

TEMPLE. I told her that when you discovered that Martha had assumed your name and given your Pickleton address, you allowed it to pass, as you hadn't the heart to contradict her.

FULLER. (*turns away slowly and knowingly*) You see, I told you—you were getting on. (*looking at paper, suddenly and with surprise*) I say, old fellow, this is a bit awkward. Your wife mustn't see this.

TEMPLE. What is it?

FULLER. (*crossing to him with paper*) Here are the headlines. (*reading*) "Sensational affair last night at Earl's Court. The Ferris Wheel stops in



mid-air. Many of the passengers imprisoned in the cars. Greatest consternation prevails."

TEMPLE. That's quite enough—you needn't read any more. (FULLER crosses back to right and again sits at table) Why the devil do they print these things in the paper? (enter MRS. TEMPLE from R. 3. E. TEMPLE picks up paper which is lying on sofa) Yes, here it is again: "Accident to the Ferris Wheel. Startling details." (TEMPLE goes on reading paragraph. FULLER is also engrossed in his paper)

MRS. TEMPLE. (aside at back) They both appear very much absorbed in the newspapers. I wonder what the attraction is?

FULLER. I say, Jack, does your paper give names?

TEMPLE. (despairingly) I hope not.

MRS. TEMPLE. You seem to be very interested. What are you reading about? (MRS. TEMPLE goes back of sofa)

TEMPLE. (starts, pats MRS. TEMPLE's cheek with his left hand, and keeping paper away from her in his right) Reading about? Ah, there's a very able article on the cultivation of peanuts. Perhaps you would like to hear about it. It appears that peanuts—

MRS. TEMPLE. (goes around left of sofa to front of same) Oh, bother peanuts! (JACK rises and crosses over to mantel right. MRS. TEMPLE comes to centre) Now, Mr. Brown, I'm sure you were engrossed in something more interesting than peanuts.

FULLER. (rises, comes to C. R. of MRS. TEMPLE, bringing paper with him) Oh, yes. You see, it appears at present that the political horizon, owing to unforeseen diplomatic circumstances, is rather ominously clouded. The advisability of using all

possible diplomacy with regard to Germany should be most carefully considered. Now, from this paper it appears that at present Germany is full of Germans who—

MRS. TEMPLE. Oh, bother Germany! (MRS. TEMPLE *crosses back of FULLER to JACK, who is at mantel. FULLER goes up to window at back*) Jack, let me look at your paper. I want to see the verdict in Lady Winsome's divorce case.

TEMPLE. (*looking on mantel*) It's a singular thing that there's never a box of matches in any room in the house. I've told the servants about it till I'm tired. (*he tears piece out of paper, then hands paper to MRS. TEMPLE. He rolls torn piece and puts it in fire to light cigarette. N. B. There is a lighted candle in down stage end of grate for this purpose, which is extinguished after TEMPLE lights paper*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*annoyed*) Oh, dear, you've torn a great piece out of the paper.

TEMPLE. Did I? Oh, it doesn't matter; it was only the article on peanuts.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*crossing to sofa*) I hardly ever read the papers.

FULLER. (*coming down to chair left of table, stands, looks at paper on table*) That's lucky for you, Jack.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*sits on sofa*) But I'm interested in this particular divorce case. I know Lady Winsome intimately, and—oh, here it is: "Divorce in high life—the co-respondent cross-examined." Now, please don't speak to me until I've finished the case?

WIGSON. (*enters from C. L. U. E. with letter on salver, he comes down to right corner of sofa, giving a little cough*) Beg pardon, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*impatiently*) Well, well, what is it, Wigson?

WIGSON. Note, mum, for you. The (MRS. TEMPLE *takes note*) person is waiting outside on the doorstep.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*surprised*) Why on the doorstep?

WIGSON. Because I wouldn't let her in, mum.

TEMPLE. (*up at mantel, throws cigarette in coal scuttle*) What the deuce do you mean, Wigson?

WIGSON. (L. C.) I mean, sir, that the female lunatic is here again. (FULLER, *who has been looking at paper, his back to them, turns quickly. JACK drops down right of table*) I wouldn't allow her to come into the hall, and I put the chain up, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*rises takes a step down and towards left, still in front of sofa*) What, that woman, that impostor! has actually dared to call again.

TEMPLE. It's monstrous!

FULLER. It's audacious!

MRS. TEMPLE. (*having opened letter, reads same quickly. All the men listen*) "Honored Madam—I beg of you to see me for a few minutes. I promise to be most respectable, and to keep my place. Do please see me and have pity on me. Your obedient servant, Martha Brown."

FULLER. (*turns slowly to R. and says aside to JACK*) Jack, it's Martha.

TEMPLE. (*softly*) Martha!

WIGSON. (*smiling, turns his head towards FULLER and TEMPLE*) Martha! (FULLER and TEMPLE

look at WIGSON. *He changes to serious expression and turns his head to left*)

MRS. TEMPLE. This is a curious letter. She evidently wishes to tell me something.

TEMPLE. *(crossing excitedly to C. WIGSON is L. of him)* Don't have her up.

FULLER. *(R. C. by table)* You must not think of seeing her.

MRS. TEMPLE. *(L. front of sofa)* I don't think I can see her.

TEMPLE. Impossible.

FULLER. Preposterous!

MRS. TEMPLE. Did she try to force her way in?

WIGSON. No, mum, I think she's tamer than she was. I could hear her sobbing outside the door.

MRS. TEMPLE. She has evidently repented of her wickedness.

WIGSON. Yes, mum, I think she's repented right enough. She's very limp, mum, and white, mum, and sticky, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. Poor thing!

TEMPLE. I cannot allow you—in fact, I absolutely forbid you to have another interview with this sticky woman.

FULLER. Jack is perfectly right, Mrs. Temple. You know, the consequence might be disastrous.

MRS. TEMPLE. I feel very sorry for her. *(FULLER goes up to mantel, picks up paper from settee)*

TEMPLE. Of course we're all sorry for people who tell untruths. *(WIGSON, who faces front, gives a loud chuckle, he winks at TEMPLE and nods his head in MRS. TEMPLE'S direction. TEMPLE looks at him angrily. WIGSON endeavors to control his laugh-*

ter, but it is almost impossible. MRS. TEMPLE is looking at note and doesn't see this bus.)

MRS. TEMPLE. (coming to R. of lower corner of sofa) Jack, dear, this poor woman had done wrong, but we must not be hard on her. She asks me to have pity on her, I'll see her—(WIGSON goes up a little L.)

TEMPLE. (going to R. of her) I tell you it's impossible.

MRS. TEMPLE. I've made up my mind, Jack. I repeat, Wigson, I'll see her.

WIGSON. (goes up between desk and piano L.) Very good, mum. (WIGSON exits C. to L.)

TEMPLE. My dearest, you are wrong; you are making a distinct mistake. You ought not to see this woman, and I put it, I think, *very strongly to you* that it is contrary to my wishes.

MRS. TEMPLE. (patting his cheek) Don't say that, Jack. You know you have the kindest heart in the world. (MRS. TEMPLE goes L. in front of sofa and around L. end of same, up to piano, then drops down again)

TEMPLE. Well, perhaps I have. (crossing to FULLER, who is up at mantel. Aside) What's going to happen now?

FULLER. (R. near mantel, aside) The Lord only knows. We must trust in Providence.

TEMPLE. (L. of FULLER, aside) Well, for my part, I shall trust in you. You have the devil's own lock.

FULLER. (aside) I know, old man, but things begin to look serious. (throws paper on settee)

(Enter WIGSON C. from L. U. E.)

WIGSON. The sticky person, mum.

(Enter MARTHA C. from L. U. E. FULLER crosses to R. C. leans on chair L. of table. JACK drops down R. of table. WIGSON exits after MARTHA is on. MRS. TEMPLE is back of sofa, left corner.)

MARTHA. (comes down to right corner of sofa) Much obliged to you for seeing me. I'm not cross now; I'm only an unhappy lady. I can understand your infatuation for my handsome John, but won't you jes' refuse to see him the next time he calls, and please don't send him any more telegraphs.

MRS. TEMPLE. *What is all this?* I imagined from your letter that you wished to confess your crime—wished to tell me why you took the name of Mrs. John Brown.

MARTHA. Mrs. John Brown is my name. Jes' look in my face; you can see I ain't tellin' nothing' but the truth.

MRS. TEMPLE. You dare to say this in the presence of that gentleman! (MRS. TEMPLE comes down a little left of sofa. FULLER drops down centre. MRS. TEMPLE points to FULLER) Mr. John Brown, of Elm Avenue, Pickleton.

MARTHA. But my name is—

MRS. TEMPLE. I refuse to hear another syllable from you. I consented to see you, thinking you were contrite. My leniency was misplaced.

MARTHA. Madam, I assure you—

MRS. TEMPLE. Not another word. (goes to door L. 2) I leave my husband and the true Mr. Brown to deal with you as you deserve. Jack, do as you

think fit! for my part I should suggest the police
(*exit L. 2 E.*)

MARTHA. (*turns to FULLER and TEMPLE, she comes down R. of sofa, sits on same*) Gentlemen, I promised to be respectable and humble, but my husband and me is Mr. and Mrs. Brown of Elm Avenue, Pickleton.

TEMPLE. (*R. front of table*) Oh, no, you're mistaken.

FULLER. (*C.*) You only think you live there.

MARTHA. (*rising and coming a little to L. C.*) We have lived there for three years—my larnlord, Mr. Renton, can tell you I'm not lyin'. Write him—he lives at No. 4 Forrest Ave., West Pickleton.

FULLER. *West* (*then aside, looking towards JACK*) Jack—there's a way out of this. (*going over to R. of MARTHA, who is just below R. corner of sofa.*) Why, that's where I live, Elm Avenue, West Pickleton.

TEMPLE. (*coming over R. of FULLER*) West Pickleton? When I gave my wife your address I never said West Pickleton.

FULLER. Do you tell me that you actually left out the West?

TEMPLE. (*unable to control his laughter—puts hand to mouth, turns and goes up and over to C., after laugh he turns back R. of FULLER*) Well, you see, I've only been there once—I remember we got out at Pickleton Junction. I didn't hear whether it was North, South or West Pickleton. How should I know?

MARTHA. There is Pickleton proper, East and West Pickleton.

FULLER. (*looking at TEMPLE*) She knows!

TEMPLE. Then we have been at cross purposes.
(TEMPLE goes over R. C. by chair L. of table)

FULLER. (to MARTHA) You probably know where I live—I live in a little cottage, which is very close to the river, looking due North.

MARTHA. (thinks for a second) Why, of course I do—one of the cottages that Mr. Renton built.

FULLER. (touching her arm) That's right (to TEMPLE) Renton, you know, is my landlord— (to MARTHA) Dear old Rent!

(FULLER goes back of TEMPLE and over to mantel, looks in mirror, arranges tie, then drops down R. of table R.)

MARTHA. Then I must have passed your house lots of times.

FULLER. (down R. of table) Why, more than that.

MARTHA. Oh, dear, dear—how glad I am! (she comes to centre, a little up. TEMPLE at the same time advances a couple of steps and meets her. He is R. C.)

TEMPLE. My dear Mrs. Brown, I owe you an apology. My wife sent a telegram to the wrong address that I gave her, hence all this trouble. She meant to wire to my friend here, John.

MARTHA. And my husband received it by mistake. (giving telegram which she carries in small bag.)

TEMPLE. (takes telegram) I assure you—

MARTHA. Oh, please don't apologize. (MRS. BROWN goes up stage towards L. U. E. TEMPLE goes up a little, so that he is just behind arm-chair, up

stage R. c.) I understand everything, and John is my John again. Good evening, gentlemen. I'm glad you're a neighbor of mine, Mr. Brown, and I'll call and see your wife to-morrow. (FULLER looks away to front) Oh, don't be afraid, Mr. Brown—I won't tell your wife you made love to me.

(MARTHA exits L. U. E. FULLER turns his head quickly, and looks after her. TEMPLE also looks towards L. U. E. After laugh, TEMPLE turns his head slowly, and looks down at FULLER. He has a broad grin on his face. FULLER stands by R. lower corner of table.)

TEMPLE. (coming down by chair L. of table) Frank, you're a beautiful liar! Your treatment of that last fib was thoroughly artistic. I also admired your little picturesque touches with regard to the cottage, close to the river, looking due North.

(Enter MRS. TEMPLE from L. 2 E.)

MRS. TEMPLE. (coming to c.) So you have got rid of that wretched woman? What did she say?

TEMPLE. (going C. R. of MRS. TEMPLE) Oh, she soon gave in when we tackled her. Brown cross-examined her, and she gave up the telegram. (hands her the telegram)

MRS. TEMPLE. She must have left very hurriedly.

FULLER. (leaning on chair R. of table) Bolted off like a shot.

TEMPLE. She was frightened out of her life.

FULLER. Thinks the police are after her.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*hands back telegram*) Did she confess?

TEMPLE. Confess? I should say she did. She started in by saying—

FULLER. Come, come, come now, Jack. I say, old man, be truthful. No, she didn't exactly confess, Mrs. Temple; but she turned very white—became paralyzed with fear and just booted—that's all she did—but she didn't confess. (FULLER *crosses back of table, goes around chair L. of table and sits on same. In going around he looks at TEMPLE, as much as to say "No, Jack, I can't stand for that."* TEMPLE *is amazed at FULLER's audacity*)

MRS. TEMPLE. I'm glad she's out of the house. (*crossing to sofa, sits and takes up paper*) I'm in such a nervous state I'm not fit for anything.

TEMPLE. (*goes to her, places his hand on her head*) There, there, don't worry yourself—read your paper. (TEMPLE *crosses to right back of table, puts telegram on same*)

MRS. TEMPLE. The report of the case is ridiculously short in this paper. Please pass me yours, Mr. Brown. There may be more details in that one. Why report a divorce case without giving details—it's like a pickle without spice. (FULLER *tears out a large piece from the paper*) Why, what are you tearing out?

FULLER. (*rises, comes to R. C.*) Excuse me, Mrs. Temple; I was just reading about a wonderful invention—a railroad train that runs without tracks. (*gives torn piece of paper to JACK, who is behind, and R. of him. Then he crosses to sofa, handing MRS. TEMPLE the paper*) You will find a full ac-

count of the trial just where my finger is (TEMPLE goes up to door R. 3 E.)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*taking paper*) Thank you so much.

FULLER. Not at all. (FULLER joins JACK, who is waiting for him at R. 3 E., speaking as he goes up) I tell you, Jack, that invention is going to revolutionize the railroad business. A train can go wherever it pleases. The engine lays down the track and the last car picks it up. (*they exit quickly R. 3 E.* MRS. TEMPLE listens to the above speech and expresses surprise)

(Enter Wigson from L. U. E. He stands over R. C. at back.)

WIGSON. The lady to see you about my character, mum.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*annoyed*) Oh, bother, I suppose I must see her. (*rises, stands L. front of sofa.* MRS. FULLER enters from L. U. E. Ladies bow. After MRS. FULLER passes, WIGSON exits L. U. E.)

MRS. FULLER. (*coming down L. C.*) I must apologize for calling at this hour. It's very late—almost dinner time. You must excuse me—I have been so worried—have had so much trouble. (MRS. FULLER comes down R. of sofa. MRS. TEMPLE stands in front of same a little to the left)

MRS. TEMPLE. We all have our worries and troubles, my dear Mrs.—Mrs.—

MRS. FULLER. Fuller.

MRS. TEMPLE. Not Mrs. Frank Fuller?

MRS. FULLER. Yes.

MRS. TEMPLE. Why, Frank Fuller is one of my husband's old friends. I think they were at Oxford together.

MRS. FULLER. How small the world is. I remember now, hearing my husband speak a word of Mr. Jack Temple, but I had quite forgotten it. I'm really so pleased to meet you, my dear Mrs. Temple. (*advances to front of sofa, giving her hand to MRS. TEMPLE*)

MRS. TEMPLE. And I'm delighted to make your acquaintance, my dear Mrs. Fuller. Please sit down, and make yourself quite at home. Will you have some tea? (*both sit on sofa. MRS. TEMPLE left, MRS. FULLER right*)

MRS. FULLER. Many thanks, no. Fancy our becoming acquainted like this. It's quite delightful. I had no idea I was coming to the home of my husband's friends. Of course, I've never had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Temple. Does your son resemble his father?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*surprised*) Why, I have no son.

MRS. FULLER. Now that I have met you, I realize how absurd my question was—I should have said your step-son.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*laughs*) Why, I haven't even a step-son. You must have been thinking of some other family of the same name.

MRS. TEMPLE. Jack told me that you both were in Paris.

MRS. FULLER. We were, but I came on ahead to open up the house. I expect Frank home to-morrow.

MRS. TEMPLE. I have never had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Fuller, but I've heard so much about him, that I seem to know him quite as an old friend.

Well, now that we've become acquainted, we must not stand on ceremony. Why not stay and have dinner with us?

MRS. FULLER. (*hesitatingly*) It's awfully good of you—but—there are reasons why I cannot.

MRS. TEMPLE. Now, I won't have any excuses. Jack will be overjoyed to see his friend's wife. You have no engagement?

MRS. FULLER. No, I haven't—still, I—

MRS. TEMPLE. Then, it's settled—you stay to dinner. Let me take your hat. (MRS. FULLER takes off her hat, hands same to MRS. TEMPLE, who goes around left of sofa to piano, here she places hat and returns back of sofa) We shall be quite by ourselves; another friend of my husband's is dining with us, a Mr. John Brown. Do you happen to know Mr. Brown?

MRS. FULLER. Mr. Brown? No, I'm sure I don't.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*sits L. of sofa*) Regarding Wigson's character, I'll tell you all about that after dinner. You don't look very well. Are you feeling faint?

MRS. FULLER. No, not faint—but, oh, I'm in such trouble. Frank is really too good to me. I shall have to tell him everything, he's so kind—so truthful himself, but he's terribly jealous. You don't know—

MRS. TEMPLE. There, there, dear. (*puts arm about MRS. FULLER*) I'm sure you haven't done anything wrong. Tell me all about it.

MRS. FULLER. No, no, I really couldn't. I'm afraid Frank won't understand.

MRS. TEMPLE. You surely haven't compromised yourself in that way.

MRS. FULLER. I'm afraid I have—with a man.

MRS. TEMPLE. Dear, dear!

MRS. FULLER. But it wasn't my fault.

MRS. TEMPLE. That's what I've always said—that in these cases it is entirely the man's fault.

MRS. FULLER. No, it wasn't his fault; it was our misfortune, not our fault—we couldn't help it—you don't understand.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*rises and crosses to right, stops c., aside*) I'm afraid I do understand. (*aloud*) Excuse me, please, I must speak to cook. (*continues crossing to right*) I'm sorry I asked her to stay; I'm afraid she's not quite the sort of person I ought to know.

(*Exit R. 2 E.*)

MRS. FULLER. (*rises, crosses over to table right, places gloves on same*) Oh, dear, I wish I hadn't said I'd dine here—but I thought it the best way of obtaining my glasses. (*goes up to mantel, arranges hair*) The person who has them is evidently not Mr. Temple—probably the John Brown she referred to, who, not wishing to be known, has assumed the name of his host. (*crosses back of sofa, takes up paper and sits right end of sofa*) I shall feel much easier when Frank knows all about this silly affair. Poor fellow, how lonely he must be without me—and yet I'm nervous about meeting him to-morrow. (*reads paper*)

(*FULLER enters from upstairs R. 4 E. He has the field-glasses in left hand, looks at watch, then*

at half past twelve on landing. He is about to go to the centre to L., presumably to return the glasses to the lady in the cab. He discovers MRS. FULLER on sofa, he comes down C. slowly and curiously, recognizes her, turns quickly, goes up towards R. 3 E. MRS. FULLER recognizes him, she starts up. In great surprise)

Why, Frank!

FULLER. Why, Nellie! (FULLER speaks this line with his back to her. They meet C. FRANK puts his left arm about her, he has transferred glasses to right hand, that he keeps behind him)

MRS. FULLER. (taking a step away) What an extraordinary thing! Then you've come back?

FULLER. (off his guard) No, I haven't—I mean, yes, I have.

MRS. FULLER. (goes down to L. corner of sofa. As soon as her back is turned, FRANK drops glasses on desk) How long have you been in the city? (turns to him) You said you would not arrive till to-morrow, and why are you in this house?

FULLER. (advancing towards her, front of sofa, and taking her hand) Here, one question at a time, little woman. The fact is, I received a cable from the firm, which brought me back to town unexpectedly—but my intention was to take you by surprise. (puts his hands on her shoulders)

MRS. FULLER. (sits L. of sofa) Well, I'm surprised all right, but go on.

FULLER. (sits R. of sofa) Well, you see, I arrived at Charing Cross Station this morning, jumped into a cab, gave the driver my address, and told him to make all speed. (taking her hands) As the

dearest little woman in the world would be there to welcome me. (*looks quickly towards R.*) As I passed Jack Temple's house, I saw Mrs. Temple standing at the door. She appeared to be laboring under some great mental excitement. She recognized me in the cab, beckoned me to stop, which I did. I stayed to lunch and dinner, and here I am.

MRS. FULLER. (*turning away from him to left*) And you preferred staying here all day to coming home to your own wife! I couldn't have believed it of you.

FULLER. (*puts his arm about her for a second*) Now, dearest, don't say that; but I found Jack Temple in great trouble. (*MRS. FULLER turns to him again*) A terrible state of affairs, and I was fortunately able to render him great assistance. You see, he'd been very ill, and the doctors had given him up, and I was obliged to remain here on the spot, you know. I daren't leave him.

MRS. FULLER. But why?

FULLER. (*looks to right before speaking, picks up fan from her lap*) Well, it's rather a long story, but the fact is, Jack and his wife have had a little trouble and she was going home to her mother, and I happened in—in the nick of time—and by the aid of a little diplomacy, was fortunately able to bring husband and wife together again. (*puts fan on her lap*)

MRS. FULLER. (*very interested*) Oh, Frank, tell me all about it. What was it she'd been doing—or was it that he'd been doing anything—but she thought he had?

FULLER. Whereas all the time he'd been doing nothing.



MRS. FULLER. What was the something that he thought—she thought he had been doing?

FULLER. (*rapidly*) Well, you see, he thought that she thought—that he—

MRS. FULLER. (*places finger on his lip*) Would you mind saying that slowly?

FULLER. (*not knowing exactly what to say*) Well, never mind what she thought now—it's all over, thank goodness. But, I say, you haven't told me how it was that you happened in on the scene.

MRS. FULLER. I came for the butler's character.

FULLER. (*with disgust*) What, that butler? (*looks to front*)

MRS. FULLER. Mrs. Temple and I compared notes—found that our husbands were old friends.—

FULLER. (*pleased*) I see—

MRS. FULLER. And she has asked me to stay to dinner. (MRS. FULLER *risés, goes around left of sofa, then up stage to c., where she arranges her hair*)

FULLER. (*pleased, rings and goes c.*) This is delightful! (*his expression changes*) Oh, by Jove, no, this will never do. I can't. I've got to get out. (*takes out handkerchief, goes over to table, falls in chair L. of same, pretending to cough very severely*) Oh, dear, dear! (MRS. FULLER *comes down to him, slaps him on the back*)

MRS. FULLER. What's the matter dear? (FULLER, *who has his handkerchief up to his face, looks up*)

FULLER. Oh, it's nothing, dear—nothing but a bad attack of distemper. (MRS. FULLER *repeats "Distemper."*) FULLER *jumps up quickly.* MRS. FULLER *retreats a little to c. He goes to her, takes*

her hands) I mean dyspepsia. Do you know that I always get dyspepsia at the very idea of dining away from home. We don't want to dine to-day—we dined yesterday, and we'll dine again to-morrow. (*places her hand under his arm*) Come, my dear, let's get away before she gets back. (*starts to go up R.*)

MRS. FULLER. (*withdrawing her hand and crossing down to front of sofa*) My dear, it's impossible. It would look so odd! (*she sits L. of sofa*) Now come and sit down here by me.

FULLER. (*going to her at sofa, excitedly*) I don't care how it looks—let's be off. That's the most important consideration.

MRS. FULLER. (*takes his arm and pulls him down on sofa*) Dearest, what is the matter with you—you seem quite excited. (*he looks towards R. holding his face in her hands, she turns his head around*) Let me look into your eyes. Tell me, darling, why are you so anxious for us to leave?

FULLER. (*taking both her hands in his, smiles and says softly*) Because, little woman, I want you all to myself.

MRS. FULLER. (*after laugh*) But we can't make any excuses now.

FULLER. (*quietly*) I could.

MRS. FULLER. It would be so terribly rude. (*FULLER looks toward R.*) Are you sure you love your little wife?

FULLER. (*turning to her*) Why, you know I do, dearest.

MRS. FULLER. More than anyone else in the world?

FULLER. More than anyone else in the world.

(MRS. TEMPLE *enters R. 2 E. and stands aghast, watching them*)

MRS. FULLER. Then my sweetheart shall have lots of kisses.

FULLER. Yes.

MRS. FULLER. (*kissing him on right cheek first*) One, two—and one for his iccle chin!

FULLER. (*imitating, kissing her left cheek first*) Now it's my turn. One, two—and one for her noseey posey—

MRS. TEMPLE. (*coming to C. in a great rage*) Stop! (FULLER *looks around, sees her, and collapses*) I should have interrupted you before, but I was speechless with amazement

MRS. FULLER. (*coolly*) But why?

MRS. TEMPLE. (C.) Why? How can you ask that question when I come in and overhear your making love to each other in the most barefaced manner.

MRS. FULLER. Of course we were making love to each other—why shouldn't we?

FULLER. (*attempting lightness*) Yes, why shouldn't we?

MRS. TEMPLE. You own it—own that you love this man?

MRS. FULLER. Why certainly— isn't he my own tiddleums? (*throws her arms about FULLER. Both are still seated*)

MRS. TEMPLE. Your tiddleums! (*goes right front of table*)

MRS. FULLER. (*caressing him*) Yes, bless his old face.

MRS. TEMPLE. Of course, I cannot prevent your scandalous conduct. but I can prevent your making love to each other in my house. (*comes back to c.*)

MRS. FULLER. Well, of course, we didn't know you were listening, and perhaps it wasn't good form but, after all, what does it matter?

MRS. TEMPLE. Not good form? It doesn't matter? Good Heavens! (*goes down right*) And pray, Madam, why did you tell me five minutes ago that you did not know this gentleman? (*comes to R. C.*)

MRS. FULLER. Nonsense! You must be dreaming. Not know my own cockalorum tibby?

FULLER. (*aside to MRS. FULLER*) I say, dearest, the sooner we're out of this house, the better. Come on. (*they both rise, FULLER goes to L. C.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*comes to c.*) As for you, sir, I am utterly mistaken in you. I took you for an upright, honest man.

FULLER. Well, I'm not—I mean, I am.

MRS. FULLER. (*going to him and taking his left arm*) So he is.

MRS. TEMPLE. And what do I find? A man full of deceit—a hypocrite, who pretends to love his wife dearly, and is at the same time making love shamelessly to another woman.

MRS. FULLER. (*withdraws her hand, and goes a little to left*) How dare you say that, Mrs. Temple?

MRS. TEMPLE. Don't interrupt me. As for you, sir, the sooner you return to your home at Pickleton, the better. (*sweeps down to R. corner, then back and up stage c.*)

MRS. FULLER. (*down L. C., astonished*) Home at Pickleton? Frank, what does she mean?

FULLER. (*looks at MRS. TEMPLE, smiles very unnaturally, then speaks to MRS. FULLER*) She doesn't know what she means—I mean I don't know what she means. I'll explain all later. (*plays with her fan*)

MRS. FULLER. (*very angrily*) You'll explain now, sir, this minute.

FULLER. I prefer to explain later.

MRS. FULLER. (*stamping her foot*) Will you speak, sir?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*coming down R. C.*) This display of virtuous indignation is rather overdone. It comes rather late in the day, as you told me that you had compromised yourself with a man. (MRS. FULLER *goes a little to left, and turns her head away from FRANK*)

FULLER. (*turning to MRS. FULLER, not realizing*) What's this—you've compromised yourself with a—

MRS. TEMPLE. That it wasn't his fault. (FULLER *turns to MRS. TEMPLE*) And it wasn't your fault, and you couldn't help it. (MRS. TEMPLE *goes up stage C.*)

FULLER. (*turning to MRS. FULLER*) What's this? What couldn't you help?

MRS. FULLER. (*turns to him, hesitating*) I'll tell you sometime.

FULLER. You'll tell me this instant. (*strikes his left hand with right in great rage, not loud, but with great intensity*)

MRS. FULLER. No, some other time.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*coming down to R. C.*) This assumption of temper appears to me to be somewhat forced.

FULLER. (*repressed*) Do I look as if I were pretending to be angry? I'm only doing this for fun (*goes up stage c., then to chair at desk*)

MRS. TEMPLE. This conduct shall not be allowed in my house. Pray, reserve it for your home at Pickleton. I'm now going to fetch my husband. (*crosses to right, going around front of table, leaving her right of same*)

MRS. FULLER. One moment, please. (MRS. TEMPLE stops. MRS. FULLER crosses R., stopping left of table) How do you know? What proof have you that he has a home at Pickleton?

MRS. TEMPLE. Because I wired to his house, and he came in answer to the telegram.

MRS. FULLER. You wired him? What for?

MRS. TEMPLE. That is my business.

MRS. FULLER. On the contrary, it is mine. (*speaks up stage to FULLER*) Frank! Have you that telegram?

FULLER. (*is seated at desk, back to audience, head resting on his hands, he answers, turning around.*) It's a forgery. I never received it.

MRS. FULLER. (*taking telegram from MRS. TEMPLE, and as she reads it, crosses to extreme left of sofa*) Let me have it, please. (*reads*) "To John Brown, Elm Avenue, Pickleton." I told you before that I didn't know anyone of that name.

MRS. TEMPLE. Considering his relation with you he naturally adopted another name. I believe it's usual in these cases.

MRS. FULLER. (*going up stage left of sofa to left of desk*) Is this true? Did you call yourself Brown?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*advancing to R. C.*) Call himself Brown. Why, he is Brown! (FULLER *turns to* MRS. TEMPLE, *crosses and throws himself into arm-chair R. C.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. My husband has known him for years, and last night stayed at his cottage, and was introduced to his wife.

MRS. FULLER. His wife! (*comes down left of sofa to front of same. FULLER crosses to settee R., throws himself on same. MRS. TEMPLE goes R. C.*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*near chair L. of table*) Yes, and pray, ask him to tell you about his beautiful twins. (FULLER *jumps up and walks up stage excitedly to window L., then down C.*)

MRS. FULLER. Twins? (*sinks on sofa, head resting on pillow left*)

MRS. TEMPLE. Yes, Alphonse and Gaston, who are so enormous for their size.

FULLER. (*tries to persuade MRS. TEMPLE to stop. She pays no attention to him, he then goes to MRS. FULLER, puts his hands on her shoulders*) Will you hear me, will you let me explain?

MRS. TEMPLE. Oh, I suppose he told you he was a single man. (FULLER, *finding it impossible to speak, says in action "What's the use." He goes up to bay window L. C. at back, puts his hands in his pockets, his head down, and walks in an excited manner from window to door R. 2 E.*) But what does it matter. You are just as bad as he—(MRS. TEMPLE *crosses to right corner of sofa*) Kindly return that telegram.

MRS. FULLER. (*reading telegram*) "Implore you to see me. Husband must not know. Happiness depends on you. Signed, Clara Temple." (*rises as*

she reads the signature, goes to left corner, turns)
So. Madam, it seems that you are as bad as he is.

FULLER. (*FULLER times his walk so that he is back of table for this line*) She's worse—she's worse! (*continues walking up stage, then stops behind arm-chair up stage*)

MRS. FULLER. (*L. corner of sofa*) You play the spy, catch us kissing, and at once become madly jealous of me.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*laughs*) Jealous of you.

(*MRS. TEMPLE crosses to right, FULLER laughs*)

MRS. FULLER. (*coming to centre*) Now I've read your telegram, I firmly believe this home at Pickleton is kept up for your benefit. (*FULLER laughs hysterically, covers face with handkerchief and sits on settee*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*crossing in a rage to front of sofa*) Monstrous! My husband, I told you, was introduced to his wife last night.

MRS. FULLER. (*angrily crossing to left of FULLER*) How many wives have you?

FULLER. (*jumping up*) You're the only one I know of. (*MRS. FULLER goes to desk, so that her face is away from TEMPLE when he enters*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*in front of mirror, corner of sofa*) Then I presume you occasionally call yourself **Fuller**.

FULLER. (*down by chair left of table*) That is my real name.

MRS. TEMPLE. And you have the audacity to say that you are my husband's friend, Frank Fuller?

FULLER. Once and for all, yes.

MRS. TEMPLE. And you are perhaps aware that my husband has never met Mrs. Fuller.

FULLER. (R. C.) I am absolutely certain of it.

TEMPLE. (*laughs outside R. 3 E., speaking as he enters. He goes down stage, between arm-chair and settee*) That story will be the death of me. (*stops E. corner of table*)

MRS. TEMPLE. You are just in time. Do you know this lady. (MRS. TEMPLE *points to* MRS. FULLER, *who is standing by desk chair, her back is to* TEMPLE *and her left hand rests on back of chair*)

TEMPLE. This lady? (*he goes in front of table, crosses FULLER and up to right of* MRS. FULLER. *Not knowing whom he is going to meet, he has a smile on his face. As he reaches her side, going close to her, she turns, and the recognition takes place. MRS. FULLER's hand is still on back of chair, after the meeting, she turns slowly towards left, bending over chair. TEMPLE, on seeing* MRS. FULLER, *changes his expression to one of horror, he moves away from her a step, which must be almost imperceptible. He stands as though petrified. FULLER and* MRS. TEMPLE, *who are watching them, both start at the recognition. MRS. TEMPLE smiles and says in her expression "I told you so."* TEMPLE *is dazed, he goes about back of table and down right of same. After laugh, bending over her, and in a subdued voice, which has the character of an aside, but which must suggest repressed anger*) I told you to wait in the cab!

MRS. FULLER. (*turning to him*) I had to call for the butler.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*triumphantly. R. cor. of sofa*)
You see they do know each other!

FULLER. (*going round back of table*) Yes, I see.

MRS. TEMPLE. And last night you had supper together?

TEMPLE. (*smiling*) Yes—but it was a very light supper.

TEMPLE goes down R. of table. FULLER goes back of chair to right corner, so that he is between Mrs. FULLER and TEMPLE—diagonally.)

FULLER. (R. C.) A light supper—you had supper with my—(*FULLER chases JACK completely around table as he speaks*) Look here, Jack—I want you to explain—I want to know the whole truth—

(At end—TEMPLE is R. lower corner of table. FULLER is L. lower corner of table.)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*angrily*) Who is that man? (*Pointing to FULLER*)

FULLER. Yes, who am I, Jack? Now, for once in your life—tell the truth. Now Mrs. Temple, it you'll kindly listen—

(He looks at Mrs. TEMPLE but indicates JACK with his right hand.)

TEMPLE. (*facing FULLER*) That man is John Brown.

(FULLER *changes his smiling expression to one of disgust—he turns, goes up stage in a straight line between arm-chair and settee—then back and down to door R. 2 E. where he pushes electric button for bell. TEMPLE goes a step to L., then faces FULLER when the latter reaches door right. FULLER looks at JACK as though he would like to thrash him and talks continually.*)

FULLER. (*at upper corner of chair right of table*) I say, Jack,—don't be a fool, I don't mean my assumed name—I mean my real name.

TEMPLE. What's the matter with you—"Brown"?

FULLER. (*pointing to MRS. TEMPLE*) Your wife doubts my identity. (*FULLER goes up stage to c., where he meets WIGSON who enters from L. U. E.*)

WIGSON. (c.) Did you ring, sir?

TEMPLE. Now, Wigson, who is that gentleman?

FULLER. (*putting his left hand on WIGSON's right arm—in a friendly way*) Good old Wigson!

(*FULLER with his left hand on WIGSON—extends his right to MRS. TEMPLE, smiling as he does so—and indicating that WIGSON will place him right.*)

Now, Mrs. Temple, you'll—

WIGSON. That, sir—is Mr. John Brown.

FULLER. (*changes pleasant expression to one of anger—makes a threatening movement towards WIGSON*) Oh, get out! (*WIGSON, frightened, exits hastily, L. U. E.*)

FULLER. (*comes down L. JACK in front of chair L. of table R. Trying to control himself*) Look

here—am I or am I not Frank Fuller?

TEMPLE. Certainly not.

FULLER. (*puts hands in pockets*) A little more of this, Jack, and I shall lose my temper. (*turns up, so that he is on a line with MRS. FULLER, pointing to her*) Who then is this lady?

TEMPLE. (*is in front of table*) How the devil should I know?

MRS. TEMPLE. (*crossing in front of Mr. and Mrs. Fuller, who are up stage She goes to R. in front of chair left of table*) You don't know her name?

TEMPLE. I asked her, but she wouldn't tell me.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*turning to Mrs. Fuller, who drops down below R. corner of sofa*) Perhaps you, too, are ignorant of who this gentleman is?

MRS. FULLER. He offered me his card but I wouldn't take it.

FULLER. (*C. down stage between Mrs. Fuller and Mrs. Temple*) She wouldn't give her name—he offered his card—Look here, why don't you admit at once—that you passed the evening together?

MRS. FULLER AND TEMPLE. We did.

MRS. TEMPLE AND FULLER. What!

(*Mrs. Temple and Fuller both go up stage then back again to original positions.*)

MRS. FULLER. (*quickly*) But we couldn't help it.

MRS. TEMPLE. This is some horrible nightmare. (*Falls in chair L. of table*)

FULLER. (*down L. C.*) Listen to me, madam, this is the last time I shall speak to you—I shall

leave you forever—forever, understand, and obtain a divorce.

MRS. FULLER. Coward, to say that—the Law shall set me free—Go back to Pickleton, return to Mrs. Brown and the enormous twins Alphonse and Gaston. (*FULLER goes to her and tries to explain—she covers her face with handkerchief*)

MRS. TEMPLE. (*rises—advances in front of table to JACK, who is R. of same*) After your confession I shall answer you only through my solicitors. I leave you this instant, viper! (*MRS. TEMPLE turns to go up stage*)

MRS. FULLER. (*to FULLER*) Scorpion!

(*MRS. FULLER turns to go up stage—they meet FULLER as they turn, and the three walk up stage together. MRS. FULLER going up between desk and piano as they reach centre.*)

WIGSON. (*enters c. from L.*) Dinner is served!

ALL. (*shouting with their backs to audience*) Oh! Go away!

TEMPLE. (*down R. by table*) Stop! Come back all of you.

(*All turn, come down stage together and stop c. same position.*)

I've got something to say—I won't keep you but a few minutes.

ALL Well.—What is it?

TEMPLE. (*to MRS. TEMPLE*) You—and you alone are the cause of all this trouble. I own that for once in my life I told you a lie.

FULLER. (*quietly*) That was wrong, Jack.

TEMPLE. But 'twas you, little woman, who forced me to it. All last night I was swinging far up in the clouds—The Ferris Wheel—as I told you, remaining motionless. You received the simple truth with scorn.

(*Takes from pocket and hands her piece torn from paper.*)

Read!

MRS. TEMPLE. But— (*reading article.*)

TEMPLE. Not a word—having driven me into inventing the John Brown story—and having discovered the imprint of your telegram on your blotting pad—I got Frank Fuller to impersonate the John Brown of my invention which, by a coincidence, turned out to be a real name and address.

(*Warn Curtain*)

MRS. TEMPLE. The Ferris Wheel evidently did stick.

FULLER. (*quietly*) It certainly did, Mrs. Temple—if you don't believe Jack, he can show you the wheel.

MRS. TEMPLE. I would believe your story, if you could prove that you really were there.

MRS. FULLER. I can prove that. (FULLER *has his back to her*) Your husband and I were there together.

TEMPLE AND FULLER. (*turn and look at her in surprise*) What?

MRS. FULLER. Yes—and we supped together on a cake of chocolate.

FULLER. (*to TEMPLE*) So this is the “Married lady in the car?”

TEMPLE. That’s right.

FULLER. Then the glasses? (*going to desk to get glasses*)

MRS. FULLER. Are mine.

FULLER. (*coming down L. c.*) Now do you know that’s a singular thing. I had an idea all along that these glasses belonged to my wife. Why, you know Jack, I wanted to take them out to the lady in the cab.

TEMPLE. I’ll swear to that.

MRS. TEMPLE. (*turning to JACK*) I’ll never doubt you again!

TEMPLE. I’m seized with a brilliant idea.

ALL. What is it?

TEMPLE. Let’s all go in to dinner.

(MUSIC—MARCH.)

(*The gentlemen offer their arms to the ladies—they go up stage talking loudly—and exit L. U. E. as the*

CURTAIN FALLS SLOWLY.

NOTE. Much of the success of this play on its original production was due to the fact that it was played in a natural, quiet and serious manner. The idea that it was funny was left to the audience.

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